Cryotherapy is approved by Medicare as a primary treatment for localized prostate cancer. It's also approved for prostate cancer that returns after any type of radiation treatment.

The benefits of the procedure include:

- a choice of general or local anesthesia.
- no radiation beam exposure.
- no permanent radiation seeds.
- unlike radical prostatectomy, cryotherapy is not major surgery.
- typically fast and easy recovery with low risk of potential side effects (such as incontinence).

Today, published studies help document the clinical value of cryotherapy as a treatment for prostate cancer. And recent 10 year data provides evidence of cryotherapy's long-term durability. Together this clinical data, along with the outcomes from thousands of patients, makes cryotherapy a viable treatment option for patients with primary prostate cancer and for prostate cancer that returns after any type of radiation.

Whether you have first-time or recurrent prostate cancer, there's a good chance you're eligible for cryotherapy as long as your cancer has not spread beyond the prostate. Of course, only a qualified doctor will know for sure.

As with any treatment for prostate cancer, side effects may occur after cryotherapy. These side effects may include loss of urinary control, injury to the rectum, and loss of sexual function.

Incontinence occurred in no more than 8% of patients. Injury to the rectum occurred in less than 0.5% of patients. Rates of impotence varied from 49% to 93% at 1 year after cryotherapy.

Other side effects may include temporary swelling, soreness, or discomfort in or around the scrotum or penis for a few days following the procedure. Talk to your doctor about what you can do to help relieve any swelling or soreness. You should also talk to your doctor about the possibility of seeing blood in your urine and what you should do if you see it.

Be sure to speak with a qualified urologist to learn more about the benefits and risks that cryotherapy may hold for you.
"I AM A GENERAL SURGEON. I DID NOT WANT RADIATION THERAPY…"

"THE REASON I CHOSE CRYOTHERAPY IS BECAUSE I FELT THAT IT WAS AS GOOD OR POSSIBLY EVEN BETTER THAN ANY OTHER THERAPY THAT I HAD RESEARCHED WITHOUT MANY OF THE TROUBLE-SOME SIDE EFFECTS. I FEEL CONFIDENT THAT I AM CURED AND WILL LIVE MY NORMAL LIFE EXPECTANCY.”

– Richard Vanderhoof, MD
Retired General Surgeon

"WE CAN ENJOY LIFE AND DO THE THINGS WE’VE ALWAYS DONE TOGETHER. HE’S HEALTHY AND HAPPY...AND THAT, TO ME, IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING.”

– Mrs. Richard Vanderhoof


2. Ellis DS. Cryosurgery as a Primary Treatment for Localized Prostate Cancer: A Community Hospital Experience. Urology 2002; 60:34-39.


Disclaimer: The decision guide is not a substitute for medical advice. Cryotherapy is a major medical procedure that involves certain inherent risks. Please consult your physician for more information.