

Dr. Robert Pugach (3rd from left) at the prestigious Minimally Invasive Ablative Therapy Conference at New York University (NYU).

Emerging Technologies and Therapies to Treat Prostate Cancer

by YVETTE M. MANARD, MPH

Focusing on his commitment to continuing education in the diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer, Dr. Robert Pugach, Medical Director of Pacific Coast Urology Medical Center attended the annual Minimally Invasive Ablative Therapy course at New York University (NYU). This prestigious conference, held on June 23-24, 2012, is now in its third year with a unique focus on bringing the latest research and techniques to aid urologists and radiologists in the diagnostic and treatment of their prostate cancer patients.

According to Dr. Pugach, the highlight of the meeting was the further refinement of new MRI techniques that allow prostate cancer to be seen at an early stage. Dr. Pugach explains, "Diffusion Weighted Imaging (DWI) and Dynamic Contrast Enhancement (DCE) are now ready for use in a community setting."

The advancement of this technology is important as DWI and DCE MRI imaging allows urologists to more accurately biopsy prostates, see the extent of a prostate cancer more clearly and help decide which men can benefit from less invasive treatment methods. "Seeing these novel methods at last year's meeting was eye opening; one year later further refinements mean that we can use them in the everyday practice of minimally invasive urology," says Dr. Pugach.

Other topics covered at the NYU meeting, included the results of early British clinical trials of spot or focal HIFU therapy for prostate cancer.



This trial is important as the finding showed that by using the precision of High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU), small prostate cancers can be treated in less than one hour without the side effects of incontinence or erectile dysfunction. "While this is an early study, results are very promising," says Dr. Pugach, "and this may lead to an era of faster, more precise treatment for small cancers without side effects or complications."

At the conference, NYU professors presented the latest results of a new laser treatment for prostate cancer using MRI guidance. MRI technology was also shown to be helpful in performing prostate biopsies. At this time, however, Dr. Pugach feels that the technique requires a lot of refinement to improve patient comfort and reduce the time required to perform biopsies with an MRI.

Dr. Pugach felt that the conference was extremely helpful and informative. "We continue to advance the concepts of minimally invasive urology for the diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer. With recent challenges from the US Government as to the efficacy of PSA testing, meetings like this one go a long way to dispel the myth that PSA testing is not a valuable tool in the fight against prostate cancer. We have seen a reduction in the death rate from prostate cancer from 50,000 to 39,000 over the past 10 years and this is due to the increased use of PSA testing. Combining testing with less invasive diagnostic and treatment options like we discussed at our meeting is clearly the wave of the future."



To learn more about minimally invasive therapies for prostate cancer and many other urological conditions, visit www.pacificcoasturology.com or call Pacific Coast Urology Medical Center at 888.735.4336