



In 1998, Dr. Pugach pioneered microwave technology for benign prostate treatment to California's medical community. With over 1,500 procedures completed, his is the leading practice worldwide for the treatment of minimally invasive benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH).

Operating out of three convenient offices (Los Alamitos, Huntington Harbour and Beverly Hills), Dr. Pugach and his professional staff at Pacific Coast Urology Medical Center specialize in personalized diagnosis and treatment for many urological health concerns including bladder control problems (from reducing frequency to eliminating leakage), No scalpel/No needle vasectomy, vasectomy reversal, prostate cancer and prostate enlargement (BPH), erectile dysfunction and urinary tract infections.

With regard to treating prostate cancer using minimally invasive technology, Dr. Pugach is one of four urologists in North America certified to teach other urologists around the world to perform High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU) treatment for prostate cancer.

"We are now at the cusp of being able to treat small prostate cancers in less than an hour and allow patients to return to normal activities and function within a few days," says Dr. Pugach.

In fact, at the time of this writing, Dr. Pugach is attending the annual American Urological Association conference in Atlanta, presenting leading-edge technological advances used to treat a

# Dr. Robert Pugach

## One of the Nation's Most Respected Physicians Pioneers Minimally Invasive Urologic Procedures – Right Here in Huntington Harbour

by Jody Robinson • photography by Xuong Do, Happy Photos

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iven the choice, what patient wouldn't prefer to seek the services of a physician who has been consistently at the forefront of new and innovative treatments within his field of expertise for almost three decades?

As one of the nation's most respected, experienced physicians specializing in urological conditions, Dr. Robert Pugach has been incorporating state-of-the-art "minimally invasive" techniques and procedures into his practice years before many other urologists were even considering implementing microwave technology, cryoablation and High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU) into their practice.

host of urological conditions to other professionals in his field.

"It's a great conference to interact with other specialists throughout the world and a hands-on opportunity to educate them about new technologies, sharing with them how we do the procedures, why they work and how to implement them into their own practices," says Dr. Pugach. "I've been fortunate to have the

opportunity to participate in such a way in the past and it has always been rewarding. Additionally, it's so fulfilling to be a part of something that expands your universe - not just for doctors here, but that will benefit patients worldwide.

Dr. Pugach credits conferences such as this with helping keep him abreast of industry trends and stay on the leading edge by learning from other experts as well.

It's not just other urologists who benefit from Dr. Pugach's shared knowledge - he routinely works with technology manufacturers to share his experiences, offer suggestions and make recommendations - information medical equipment developers can use to improve upon existing designs and utilize in the next wave of technological advances.

"What we end up with are advances in product designs that not only help patients, but change the way physicians are able to treat urological conditions," says Dr. Pugach. "The result is less invasive treatments that can hasten a patient's recovery and significantly reduce the risk of complications from older surgical procedures."

One key example is in the treatment of BPH (benign prostate growth). 90% of men who suffer from the symptoms of BPH - frequent urination, a weak stream, dripping and night time urination - can avoid surgery and expensive medications by having a single, 30 minute in-office treatment.

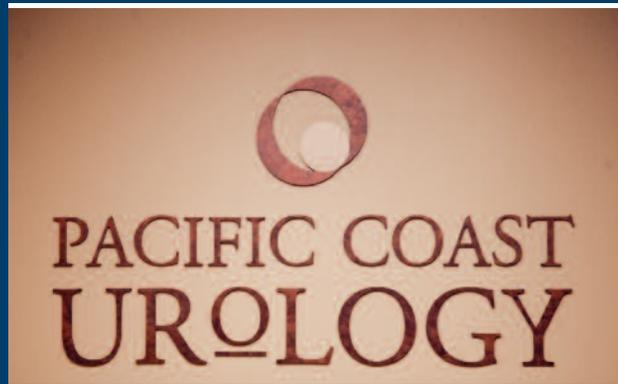
"Men with prostate cancer can now avoid radical surgery and radiation - and their potential side effects and complications - with new procedures like High Intensity Focused Ultrasound. (HIFU) uses an ultrasound probe to heat and destroy cancer cells without damaging a patient's skin or surrounding tissue. There is no incision and men can return to normal activities and function faster than ever before. We're able to destroy tumors in ways that were never imagined before," says Dr. Pugach!

"Technologies such as this end up being the new standard of care. Being able to introduce such technology to the field is a great feeling as a doctor. That's what we're all about - helping people."

Vasectomies are another area of specialization for Dr. Pugach. "Men are understandably afraid of having a vasectomy because of needles and scalpels that have been used in the past. I use the No Scalpel/No Needle technique and men feel almost nothing during and after their procedure. It allows men to resume all activities quickly. We have a good description of this special minimally invasive method on our website" says Dr. Pugach.

Because bladder control issues are an increasingly common condition for women over the age of 40, Dr. Pugach has created a Bladder Control Center in his office.

"Bladder control problems can dramatically affect a woman's life. Leakage can occur from coughing, laughing, exercising or lifting objects. Frequent or urgent needs to use a bathroom are another problem. The embarrassment of leakage or needing to use pads and diapers can affect daily lifestyle and intimacy. We can take care of that with minimally invasive office treatments that include medications and teaching patients to strengthen their pelvic muscles. An ex-



citing, new 20-minute in-office treatment called Renessa involves the application of heat to the urethra tube to stop leakage."

PTNS is another innovation used at Pacific Coast Urology Medical Center. It is the first acupuncture treatment approved by the FDA for bladder control that can literally stop the leakage after only 12 treatments.

"The most innovative is Interstim, a tiny battery that is implanted under a patient's skin," says Dr. Pugach. "Frequent urination and leakage can be stopped almost instantly with this remarkable procedure."

In recent years, Pacific Coast Urology has also become a leading practice for circumcision for adult men.

"Men in their 20s, 30s and 40s are coming in for circumcisions for a whole host of reasons - hygiene, to avoid STDs or even just for a different look," says Dr. Pugach. "There isn't a week that goes by that I'm not performing the sleeve technique to provide my patients with the best cosmetic outcome, the least amount of pain, the fastest recovery and the best functional result."

#### **Historical perspective**

Were it not for Dr. Pugach's passion to affect change in the medical community by incorporating leading-edge technologies into urological medicine and a deep desire to develop personal relationships with his patients, he might have stayed on the administrative side of the industry.

Prior to going into private practice 27 years ago, Dr. Pugach served as the California Department Head for Urology at CIGNA Health Care. But before he began adopting minimally invasive treatments in his office, he traveled to meet with engineers and manufacturers, making it a point to thoroughly understand the equipment and its capabilities.

In speaking with him, it's clear that Dr. Pugach has found his calling - as he shares anecdotal stories about the changes these minimally invasive procedures have made in the lives of his patients, it's evident that he's just as passionate about his work today, or perhaps even more so, than he was when he initially decided upon the path that would become his area of specialization.

He recounts the story of an 84-year-old woman who had become a virtual recluse because of the embarrassment of incontinence. It was the birth of a new grandchild that finally prompted this woman to seek the services of Dr. Pugach.

"After the procedure, her whole life changed," he says. "She started going out with her friends and spending more time with her family without having to worry about running to the restroom every 20 minutes. Quality of life issues - that's where medicine is heading."

"I got a call today from a patient for whom I had performed a minimally invasive vasectomy reversal. He was so happy to tell me about the birth of his son," he says. "This is what medicine is all about."

Dr. Pugach's wife, Kim, works full time in the office focusing on patient and physician outreach and daily operations. When they aren't working they share a love of trekking to international destinations, cooking, dancing and now scuba diving! Dr. Pugach is also the proud father of two grown sons Brian, 25, and Jason, 23.

*Connect with Dr. Pugach by calling (562)594-0860 (Los Alamitos) or (714)846-7275 (Huntington Harbour) or visit [www.pacificcoasturology.com](http://www.pacificcoasturology.com). His offices are located at 3801 Katella Ave., Suite 110 In Los Alamitos or 16853 Algonquin St., in Huntington Beach*