

Introduction

Deciding on a prostate cancer treatment is a significant decision. The TULSA Procedure (Transurethral Ultrasound Ablation) is a minimally invasive, radiation-free and incision-free outpatient procedure that offers a high degree of precision and preservation of quality of life. This guide will help you understand if you are a potential candidate for this advanced treatment.

What is the TULSA Procedure?

The TULSA Procedure is a cutting-edge, MRI-guided treatment that uses directional ultrasound to ablate, or destroy, targeted prostate tissue. It is a customizable and predictable procedure that actively protects the urethra and rectum, helping to preserve urinary and sexual function. The entire process is performed in a single session, and patients typically return home the same day.



Who is an Ideal Candidate for the TULSA Procedure?

Ideal candidates for the TULSA Procedure are men who have localized prostate cancer, or cancer that has not spread beyond the prostate to other parts of the body, and meet specific clinical criteria. The procedure is most effective for patients with low- to intermediate-risk prostate cancer, though TULSA-PRO™ is also performed in men with BPH (benign prostatic hyperplasia) without a prostate cancer diagnosis. Certain men who have high-risk cancer may have excellent outcomes on a case-by-case basis. Below is a summary of the key criteria for candidacy:

- **Diagnosis** - Localized low- to intermediate-risk prostate cancer. BPH with or without a suspicion of prostate cancer.
- **Tumor Visibility** - MRI-visible or imaging-visible tumor.
- **Gleason Score** - Gleason Grade Group 2 or 3. Gleason Grade, Group 1, 4 or 5 on a case-by-case basis.
- **PSA Level** - Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) level of 20 ng/mL or less for best results.
- **Tumor Location** - Disease located within the treatable distance of the TULSA device.
- **General Health and Safety** - Must be able to undergo an MRI and general anesthesia.



Who is Not a Suitable Candidate?

The TULSA Procedure is not suitable for everyone. Patients with the following conditions are generally not considered candidates for this treatment:

- **Prior Prostate Implants:** Previous implants such as Urolift™ implants can complicate the procedure.
- **Prosthetic Implants:** Pacemakers placed for non-prostate reasons can be unsafe for MRI-based surgery. Orthopedic implants such as hip replacements can affect MRI imaging.
- **Large Prostatic Calcifications:** Calcifications can interfere with ultrasound energy.
- **Urethral Strictures:** A narrowing of the urethra can prevent the insertion of the treatment device.
- **Tumor Proximity to Critical Structures:** Tumors located too close to the urinary sphincter or neurovascular bundles may result in increased damage.
- **Metastatic Cancer:** The TULSA Procedure is intended for localized prostate cancer and does not cure cancer that has spread to other parts of the body.



Key Benefits of the TULSA Procedure

The TULSA Procedure offers numerous benefits compared to traditional treatments like surgery and radiation:

- **Minimally Invasive:** No incisions or radiation are involved.
- **High Precision:** Real-time MRI guidance allows for precise targeting of diseased tissue and sparing of surrounding structures.
- **Preservation of Function:** The procedure is designed to protect the nerves and muscles that control urinary and sexual function, resulting in significantly lower rates of incontinence and erectile dysfunction.
- **Fast Recovery:** As a single, outpatient procedure, patients can return to their daily activities quickly.
- **Customizable Treatment:** The ablation can be tailored to the patient's specific anatomy and disease, with options for focal therapy, partial gland (hemi-ablation) therapy, whole-gland therapy, and nerve-sparing approaches.

References

1. Hong YM. "Transurethral Ultrasound Ablation Procedure vs Robotic-Assisted Laparoscopic Radical Prostatectomy." American Urological Association News (2024)
2. "TULSA Procedure - TULSA-PRO for Prostate Cancer, Scottsdale, Phoenix." <https://integrativeurology.com/tulsa-procedure/>
3. Klotz, et al. "Magnetic Resonance Imaging-Guided Transurethral Ultrasound Ablation of Prostate Cancer" The Journal of Urology (2021)

The TULSA Procedure: A Step-By-Step Overview

The TULSA Procedure is a well-defined, four-step process:

- 1. Preparation:** The patient is comfortably sedated, and the devices are put into place without incisions.
- 2. Planning:** Dr. Hong uses high-resolution MRI to carefully map out the precise areas of the prostate to be treated.
- 3. Delivery:** Dr. Hong controls the delivery of ultrasound energy according to the imaging plan, with real-time MRI monitoring to ensure safety and accuracy.
- 4. Confirmation:** Immediately following the ablation, Dr. Hong uses MRI to confirm that the targeted tissue has been successfully treated, and undergo additional treatment in the same session, if necessary.

Conclusion

The TULSA Procedure is a highly effective and safe treatment for localized prostate cancer, offering a minimally invasive option with a low risk of side effects. If you meet the candidacy criteria outlined in this guide, the TULSA Procedure may be an excellent choice for you. We encourage you to discuss this option with Dr. Hong to determine the best course of treatment for your individual needs.