

**\*\*Health News\*\***

***UCLA Urology to Educate the Public about Bladder Conditions during Bladder Health Week, Nov. 11 to 15***

- **25 million Americans experience bladder health issues each year**
- **Minimally invasive options give Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia patients new ways to treat their enlarged prostate**
- **At least 50 percent of men over 50 have Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia**
- **Urinary Incontinence patients have a range of treatment options**

It is estimated that more than 25 million Americans experience bladder health issues each year. During the National Association For Continence's Bladder Health Week (Nov. 11 – 15), the Urologists at UCLA are raising awareness about common bladder conditions many Americans face.

**Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH)**

Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) is a non-cancerous enlargement of the prostate. At least 50 percent of American males over the age of 50 have this condition. The prostate is a walnut-sized gland within the male reproductive system located just beneath the bladder and forms a channel through which stored urine can flow.

BPH symptoms include frequent urination, straining to urinate and feeling as if the bladder is not empty after urination. Because BPH is so common, many men feel that there is little they can do about the condition, however, left untreated BPH can lead to serious complications including higher incidences of urinary tract infections, stones in the kidney or bladder and kidney damage.

Treatment options for BPH vary from medications to surgical treatments.

- UCLA Urologists have been at the forefront of utilizing minimally invasive procedures such as "GreenLight" photovaporization (PVP) Laser Therapy, Electrovaporization (EVP) and Thermotherapy. During the PVP and EVP procedures, surgeons use either laser or plasma energy to safely vaporize tissue with minimal blood loss, creating a channel in the urethra so men are able to urinate more easily. Older forms of surgery involved cutting tissue away, which resulted in a higher rate of bleeding and the need for inpatient hospitalization.
- Thermotherapy is an office-based procedure that uses microwave energy delivered through a catheter placed into the bladder to shrink the prostate.
- UCLA surgeons also offer traditional BPH surgical treatments including transurethral resection of the prostate (TURP).

**Urinary Incontinence**

About 17 million American have urinary incontinence or loss of bladder control. This condition is much more common to females than males and does increase with age. One study showed more than half of the women between 20 and 80 experienced some form of urinary incontinence in their lifetime.

Short-term incontinence can be caused by urinary tract infections, vaginal infections, childbirth, medications or constipations. Chronic incontinence can be caused by weak or overactive bladder muscles, pelvic floor muscle weakness, blockage due to an enlarged prostate, bladder nerve damage as well as brain or spine injury.

- Stress incontinence is the most common among young and middle-aged women many times this is related to childbirth or menopause.
  - In this form of incontinence, urine leakage happens during physical activity that puts pressure on the bladder, such as coughing, sneezing, laughing, exercise or heavy lifting.
- Urge incontinence is the inability to hold urine in the bladder long enough to make it to the toilet.
  - This form is more common in patients that have diabetes, or have had a stroke or other neurological conditions,

Incontinence Treatment can vary depending on the type. Some simple lifestyle modifications may include quitting smoking, reducing the consumption of diuretics and certain medicines, Kegel exercises to strengthen the pelvic floor.

Additional treatments are available for more advanced cases of urinary incontinence.

- Injectable bulking agents, such as Coaptite, are placed in the urethra to increase the patient's resistance to urinary flow and can offer temporary relief from incontinence symptoms.
- UCLA surgeons have developed a polypropylene sling that is placed using minimally invasive surgical techniques. New data shows that this treatment is safe and effective at 11 years. A patient's own tissue may be used instead of polypropylene if the patient desires this.
- Bladder-neck suspension surgery is another treatment option.
- Future treatments are also being developed at UCLA. Urologic researchers are currently conducting pre-clinical research on the use of stem cells to enhance the bladder or urethra through tissue engineering.

### **About UCLA Urology:**

The Department of Urology at UCLA boasts a team of renowned doctors, surgeons and researchers. The internationally respected program has been recognized as the "Best in the West" and ranked fourth in the nation by U.S. News and World Reports. For more than 50 years, the multidisciplinary team has been the benchmark for urology care worldwide with its dedication to urologic health. From cutting edge prostate, bladder and testicular cancer treatments, to life changing kidney and urinary incontinence care, UCLA's urologists are pioneering health solutions for their patients everyday.

**VISUALS:** At the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center—in the lab, operating room, ICU and at the bedside.

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