

Contact: Beth Bukata  
703-839-7332  
[bethb@astro.org](mailto:bethb@astro.org)  
Nicole Napoli  
703-839-7336  
[nicolen@astro.org](mailto:nicolen@astro.org)

## Many prostate cancer patients with preserved sexual function still experience ejaculatory problems

Fairfax, Va., May 1, 2009 – Most prostate cancer patients treated with brachytherapy maintain ejaculatory function but they do experience other associated problems such as a reduction in ejaculatory volume, pain or orgasm deterioration, according to a study in the May issue of the *International Journal of Radiation Oncology\*Biography\*Physics*, the official journal of the American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO).

Erectile function is a commonly studied side effect of radiation therapy treatments for prostate cancer. Other treatments, such as radical prostatectomy, prevent patients from preserving ejaculatory function, so many patients opt for brachytherapy instead. However, no detailed analysis of the quality of ejaculatory function has been performed.

Researchers at the Departments of Urology and Andrology at the University Hospital, CHU Rangueil, and at the Paul Sabatier University, CHU Paule de Viguiet, and at the Institut Claudius Régaud, all in Toulouse, France, sought to determine the impact of brachytherapy on ejaculatory function and orgasm in sexually active men who are treated for prostate cancer.

A survey was conducted of 241 sexually active men with localized prostate cancer treated with brachytherapy. They were questioned on frequency, volume, dry ejaculation, pleasure and pain. The survey found that 81 percent of men had conserved ejaculatory function, but the number of patients who lost function was double the pretreatment number. Of the patients who maintained function, almost 85 percent reported a reduced volume (compared to 27 percent before treatment). Dry ejaculation was reported in about 19 percent of cases, 30 percent reported pain (compared with 13 percent before treatment) and 10 percent reported no orgasm (compared to 1 percent before treatment).

“Sexual dysfunction can result in psychological troubles that could lower the patient’s quality of life and self-esteem and can even reduce the quality of a couple’s relationship and marital satisfaction,” Eric Huyghe, M.D., lead

**The American Society for Radiation Oncology**  
8280 Willow Oaks Corporate Drive • Suite 500 • Fairfax • VA • 22031  
phone 703-502-1550 • fax 703-502-7852 • Web [www.astro.org](http://www.astro.org)

author of the study, said. “A better understanding of ejaculatory function and orgasm after prostate brachytherapy should be very useful for physicians treating patients with localized prostate cancer.”

*ASTRO is the largest radiation oncology society in the world, with more than 10,000 members who specialize in treating patients with radiation therapies. As the leading organization in radiation oncology, biology and physics, the Society is dedicated to improving patient care through education, clinical practice, advancement of science and advocacy. For more information on radiation therapy, visit [www.rtanswers.org](http://www.rtanswers.org). To learn more about ASTRO, visit [www.astro.org](http://www.astro.org).*

###