

Understanding Rezum: Just one of the new treatments for BPH

New techniques to treat benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) are being hailed as minimally invasive. But what do they entail? Two consultant urologists explain.

Recently in the UK, new, less invasive treatments have been approved to treat an enlarged prostate, known as BPH. While a TURP (Transurethral resection of the prostate) procedure is the most recognised option, it does carry risks, including erectile dysfunction (around 5-10%) and retrograde ejaculation (when semen enters the bladder instead of emerging through the penis during orgasm), which occurs in the majority of cases after a TURP.

Using water vapour to shrink the enlarged prostate gland

The Rezum procedure involves delivering steam into the prostate gland, which destroys tissue and shrinks the gland over the following weeks. This is particularly useful in the longer term because the prostate does continue to grow with ageing.

Rezum was given NICE approval in August 2018. Since then, Professor Hindley has begun training surgeons across the UK and Europe in delivering the treatment.

He explains: "When I first heard about Rezum, and with my previous experience of similar procedures, it seemed like it had great potential and was complimentary to the other

minimally invasive options. Here in the UK, we have traditionally been very loyal to TURP because it is a very good treatment, however, we are now developing a portfolio of minimally invasive treatments as we understand that the TURP procedure isn't for everyone, especially those who still have an active sex life."

Professor Hindley first carried out the procedure in March 2017, and it is now available in many more centres as more surgeons are trained. "With a treatment time of roughly 15-20 minutes, my hope is that this procedure could transform NHS waiting lists as well as reducing medication, as there are fewer side effects."

Patient feedback is overwhelmingly positive

While medication and surgery (TURP usually) are the two most common options for BPH sufferers, Prof Hindley hopes that minimally invasive treatments such as Rezum could fill a gap.

"The feedback we get is very positive" says Mr Hindley. "I get men telling me that they have been waiting years for a treatment like this."

The technique is now rolling out across the NHS. Mr Amr Emara,



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AMR EMARA
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another consultant urologist also at Hampshire Hospitals, who was also an early adopter of this procedure. He says men are now much happier knowing they have several options when diagnosed with BPH.

"Men, typically, don't like to talk about their concerns to avoid big operations, but this new treatment is really opening up the conversation. I find many men have already done their homework and asked for a referral for the procedure. My job then is to make sure that they are suitable."

Are minimally invasive treatments suitable for everyone?

While there are other minimally invasive treatments that can be offered with BPH, they are not suitable for everyone. Mr Emara says: "There are some cases where the prostate may be bigger than the range we recommend for Rezum (up to 90 cc), which may require a longer recovery period, but the feedback we have had is that men would much prefer a day procedure with symptoms improvement that develop over a period of time, rather than a surgical procedure with an immediate outcome that carries more risk."

Most common side effects are the

short-term, catheter related discomfort, and blood in urine in the early post-operative period. "We have had no new cases of erection problems or urinary leakage after Rezum in all the cases we have treated so far, and this is a better profile of side-effects than with current medication," explains Professor Hindley. Generally, these are tolerated quite well, as long as they are explained in advance said Mr Emara. "I find that, if men know what to expect, then they usually run a smooth post-operative recovery." I tend to describe the outcome of Rezum as making it 10 years younger without having to take daily medication.

"We do need more data, particularly around the issue of whether, in the future, younger, sexually active men should be offered a minimally invasive intervention instead of medication. We suspect this may be better for men but we need to better understand the cost-effectiveness of this strategy. A study investigating this issue is soon to be underway in France. We are keen for something similar in the UK," says Professor Hindley.

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Our treatment: why we tried Rezum

Rezum is slowly becoming more popular as a treatment for benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) after its NICE approval last year, so what did these two men think of the treatment?

Around five years ago, 69-year old Nick Pyne from Wiltshire started to get up more frequently in the night. "I was waking up three to four times to go to the toilet and sometimes I found it very difficult to empty my bladder" he says.

Nick decided to have a PSA check with his GP, and while this came back as slightly elevated, it wasn't enormously high. Nick was therefore relieved when further tests showed that his enlarged prostate was benign. However, the standard procedure for the treatment of BPH wasn't quite the outcome Nick had hoped for.

He says: "Although, there is a risk of erectile dysfunction and incontinence with all these procedures. The difference is the level of risk and I didn't like the increased risks associated with the TURP procedure. It's a risk that is frightening, really."

He decided to continue monitoring his prostate and became a familiar face at the urology unit in Bath.

But, over time, Nick found it hard to plan a journey more than an hour away, as he had to plot this around

toilet stops.

Nick was initially referred to Basingstoke hospital for a UroLift procedure, but was found unsuitable due to the size of his prostate, and then was offered Rezum, a new, pioneering treatment.

"It was the best thing I've ever done," he says. "Once I heard about the procedure I was quite relaxed about it and thought it was quite logical really. I turned up at the hospital in the morning, had the procedure in the day unit and the treatment only took 15 minutes. My wife drove me home two hours later. A week later, the catheter came out and I started to notice effects, but now, sometimes I don't even need to get up in the night. I would definitely repeat the procedure again if I needed to."

"First in and last out"

68-year old Jeffrey Clement from Wales had been suffering from disturbed sleep and a slow flow for over a decade, for which his GP prescribed two types of medication.

"I'd be the first one in the loo and the last one out," says Jeffrey. "It was obvious that I had a problem, and



NICK PYNE
BPH Patient



JEFFREY CLEMENT
BPH Patient

was a bit embarrassing. Especially on a golf trip with my friends, it was taking the enjoyment from going away.

"We also have four young grandchildren who live about a 3-hour drive away. Planning these visits necessitated numerous toilet breaks."

With the condition further exacerbated by alcohol, BPH began to take its toll on Jeffrey's social life, and so the Welsh NHS offered him a TURP procedure.

His father having had the same procedure, Jeffrey decided he wasn't prepared to take the risks. There was also a waiting list of around eight months.

After reading an article in the paper, Jeffrey discovered Rezum and had the treatment in summer 2019.

He suffered some discomfort, but is very happy with the results. He says: "I had a very slow flow about two weeks after the catheter was out and realised it was the ablated tissue that was yet to pass. After a quick visit to the hospital I was given equipment to self-catheterise and then once it had passed I found I was

having much improved results."

Jeffrey now fully enjoys his golf trips and finds himself a less frequent visitor to the toilet in the night. "In fact, I've just returned from a week's golfing in Portugal and I had a brilliant time."

"I'm now first in to the toilet and first out."

"I now look forward to the trips to see my grandchildren as the journeys have become less arduous."

"Rezum has greatly improved the quality of my life and I am no longer reliant on taking medication. I would recommend this procedure to anyone suffering symptoms like I was experiencing." ■

Read more at healthawareness.co.uk

AN URGENT NEED TO URINATE COULD BE A SIGN OF AN ENLARGED PROSTATE.

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