

River Park conducts new treatment for early stages of prostate cancer

River Park Hospital is now offering a new surgical procedure that can be effective in the treatment of early stage prostate cancer. The first brachytherapy procedure at River Park Hospital was performed last week by Dr. Oscar Spivey, board-certified urologist, and Dr. William Bradford, board-certified radiation oncologist.

Brachytherapy is an outpatient surgical procedure in which small radioactive seeds are implanted in the prostate, killing nearby cancer cells. The surgeon uses ultrasound technology to locate the prostate and guide the seed implants to the appropriate treatment area. The seeds release a controlled radiation dose for weeks or months after which, they become inactive. Once the seeds are inactive, they become harmless and will remain implanted indefinitely.

Dr. Spivey, who led efforts to bring brachytherapy to River Park, said, "Many men in the community are going elsewhere to have this procedure done. This is just one example of how we can combine the expertise of the medical community and technological resources available at River Park to better serve the patients in our community."

Brachytherapy is internal radiation therapy. Often this procedure is coupled with low-dose external radiation as part of the treatment plan. The benefit of brachytherapy is the reduced likelihood of radiation damage to normal tissue. Brachytherapy is a same day surgery procedure and patients can expect to return home that day.

"I am pleased to be able to partner with the local hospital and Dr. Spivey to make brachytherapy available to those who need it," said Dr. Bradford. "Brachytherapy, when used in the treatment of early stage prostate cancer, is highly accurate, and delivers a much more defined radiation dose than using external radiation alone."

The American Cancer Society estimates that new cases of prostate cancer will reach 186,320 in 2008. An estimated 28,660 deaths will occur from prostate cancer this year. The state of Tennessee is estimated to have 3,980 newly diagnosed cases in 2008.

"Our mission at River Park Hospital is to serve the health care needs of our community," said River Park CEO John McLain. "Dr. Spivey saw the need to make brachytherapy available to the patients we serve. It is under the guidance of both he and Dr. Bradford that we are now able to offer this procedure which can improve outcomes for men with prostate cancer. Brachytherapy is just one procedure that we are introducing this year that will expand our depth of services. By adding new technology and procedures we will be able to enhance the care we are able to provide our patients in our own community."

For further information on brachytherapy, call Dr. Spivey's Office at 473-1526.