The Yale Urology Urologic Oncology team takes a careful approach to determining the best option for treating your localized prostate cancer, along with colleagues at Smilow Cancer Hospital and Yale Cancer Center. Focal therapy falls between active surveillance and surgery and/or radiation, and because it decreases the damage to the prostate gland and surrounding areas, it can result in minimal side effects for the patient. However, it is important to note that it is not available for all patients.

About Focal Therapy
Localized prostate cancer is when the cancer is still confined within the prostate gland and its surrounding tissues. After a series of tests and exams including MRI, ultrasound, and biopsy, you may be determined to benefit from focal therapy over traditional treatment.

Focal therapy uses ablation, which is the use of extreme temperatures or energy to destroy tumors. In focal ablation, the area of the prostate that contains the most serious cancer is targeted and destroyed, rather than treating the entire prostate gland.

Focal therapy is an option for men with prostate cancer that is confined within the prostate gland and surrounding tissues.
Types of Focal Ablation

Focal ablation can be performed through a variety of methods, and the type of ablation will be determined by your specific diagnosis with the guidance of your urologic oncologist.

High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU)
HIFU uses high-frequency sound waves directed at the tumor through an ultrasound probe inserted into the rectum, causing the diseased tissue to heat up and die.

Cryotherapy
This therapy passes very cold gases through needles to freeze and destroy cancerous tissue.

Photodynamic Therapy (PDT)
Photodynamic therapy uses a drug called a photosensitizer which is injected into the bloodstream. This drug then absorbs light rays directed at the tumor, and produces an active form of oxygen that destroys cancer cells.

Focal Laser Ablation (FLA)
Focal laser ablation is the use of laser radiation energy pinpointed to a very small area to burn away cancerous tissue. Laser ablation has the advantage of being able to be performed at the same time as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), allowing very specific targeting and also real-time views of results.

Irreversible Electroporation (IRE)
IRE uses electricity in a targeted area to open holes in the cancer cells resulting in cell death. The benefit of IRE is that it is non-thermal (not hot or cold) and has a precise treatment margin.

Follow-up Care
After undergoing focal therapy, you will still need to be actively monitored to watch for disease that may have gone undetected, has returned, is spreading, or is appearing for the first time. If follow-up tests show that some of the treated cancer still remains, additional ablation may be needed.

Coordinated, Personalized Care
As with any treatment, your urologist will listen to your concerns and will help guide you through the decision-making process.

Appointments: (203) 785-2815