

## Focused Ultrasound Promising for Kidney Cancer

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*Monday, December 15, 2003*

NEW YORK (Reuters Health) - High intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU) appears to be a safe and potentially effective treatment for advanced kidney cancer.

Moreover, in contrast to other therapies such as freezing, HIFU is not invasive as the ultrasound energy is delivered extracorporeally, i.e., from outside the body.

In animal experiments, the technique has been shown to coagulate and kill tumors while sparing normal tissue. It has already been tried in people, as a treatment for an enlarged prostate and for localized prostate cancer.

In the latest study, Dr. Feng Wu and colleagues, from Chongqing University in China, tested HIFU in 13 patients with advanced kidney tumors.

Treatment was successfully completed in all patients, the investigators note in *The Journal of Urology*, and the tumor was completely eradicated in three patients. In the other 10 there was a reduction in tumor size.

After the procedure, blood flow to the tumor was seen to be reduced or absent in 10 of 13 patients. MRI scans in seven patients revealed significant tumor shrinkage. Blood in the urine resolved in 7 of 8 patients, and flank pain disappeared in 9 of 10 patients.

In general, HIFU was well tolerated with minimal complications. The first patient to undergo the procedure did develop a minor skin burn, but this healed two weeks later.

After an average follow-up period of 14.1 months, six patients had died, six remained alive, and one withdrew from the study.

"To our knowledge these clinical data demonstrate for the first time that patients with renal malignancy can be treated noninvasively with extracorporeal HIFU," Wu's team notes. "A randomized clinical trial with longer followup is necessary to determine the future role of this novel treatment of renal cell carcinoma."

SOURCE: *Journal of Urology*, December 2003.

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