

The GreenLight™ Laser Treatment

Laser gets the green light for treatment of BPH.

For some middle-aged men, it is common to wake up in the middle of the night with an overwhelming need to urinate. If urination is accompanied by a painful burning sensation, chances are these men have benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), a non-cancerous prostate enlargement. Prostate problems are so common among males that by the age of 80, some 80 percent of them might have this problem.

In BPH, the enlarged prostate presses on the urethra, which obstructs the flow of urine, causing symptoms such as frequent urination (usually at night), weak urine flow, and pain or burning during urination. Transurethral resection of the prostate (TURP) has been the gold standard surgical procedure for the treatment of severe BPH, but according to urologist Dr. Loh Chit Sin, there is a main drawback to this method.

"There is a lot of post-operative bleeding involved with this conventional surgery. A large irrigating rubber tube is inserted into the penis to wash out the blood but this can be uncomfortable and painful for patients," explains Dr. Loh. To improve this

treatment, Dr. Loh combines TURP with a minimally-invasive procedure called GreenLight™ Laser therapy. During the procedure, a small fibre is inserted into the urethra through a cystoscope. The fibre delivers laser energy that selectively and rapidly heats up the prostate tissue, causing it to vaporise.

"Unlike TURP in which tissue is cut off causing bleeding, the laser vaporises and coagulates the tissue at the same time, thus minimising bleeding," comments urologist Dr. Chua Chong Beng, adding that it usually takes about 45 minutes to treat an average sized prostate.

Another advantage of the GreenLight™ Laser is the usage of finer instruments compared to the ones used in TURP. Dr. Loh says that this translates to fewer traumas and scarring in the urine passage when the instruments are inserted into the urethra. "Furthermore, 15 percent of patients will experience erectile dysfunction after TURP but so far there has been no risk of this following the laser system," he adds. "While patients need two to four weeks to recover after TURP, they stay less than 24 hours at the hospital and can return to work the next day with the laser procedure."

Following the GreenLight™ Laser treatment, Dr. Chua says a small catheter is usually placed in the bladder. Although it is typically removed the next morning, other patients may require it for a longer period of time.

"Patients will notice an improvement in flow immediately. However, in the early days after the operation, urination may be frequent and there may be some blood in the urine," reminds Dr. Chua. Although patients can perform light tasks after the treatment, he advises them to avoid heavy exercise for the first 10 to 14 days and to drink adequate amounts of liquid.

Dr. Loh and Dr. Chua were the first to perform the GreenLight™ Laser treatment in Malaysia in 2007 and have collectively performed over 500 cases since then. "The overwhelming majority of these patients have been very satisfied and the procedure has been successful in relieving their symptoms," comments Dr. Chua.



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GREENLIGHT™ LASER THERAPY SERVICES AVAILABLE AT:

- Gleneagles Intan Medical Centre, Kuala Lumpur
 - Sunway Medical Centre, Selangor
 - Tropicana Medical Centre, Selangor
 - Prince Court Medical Centre, Kuala Lumpur
 - Sime Darby Medical Centre Subang Jaya
 - Darul Ehsan Medical Centre, Shah Alam
 - Hospital Pantai Ayer Keroh, Malacca
 - KPJ Johor Specialist Hospital, Johor Bharu
 - Medical Specialist Centre, Johor Bharu
 - Gleneagles Medical Centre, Penang
 - Loh Guan Lye Specialist Centre, Penang
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