

Prostate surgery guidelines revised

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U.S. researchers say they've determined a radical prostatectomy can be a viable option for select octogenarian patients.

The finding by Mayo Clinic Cancer Center researchers runs counter to the past conventional practice of generally avoiding surgeries for people more than 80 years of age.

"Increased life expectancy and generally higher levels of wellness, as well as safer forms of anesthesia and less-invasive surgical techniques, have made it possible for older adults to safely and effectively have surgeries traditionally not offered over a certain age," said Dr. Michael Lieber, Mayo Clinic urologist and the study's senior investigator.

A variety of treatment options exist for the slow-growing cancer, including hormone therapy, chemotherapy, radiation therapy, cryotherapy, surgery and expectant management, or "watchful waiting."

The Journal of the American Medical Association reported in 2000 urologists typically offer a radical prostatectomy to patients with more than 10 years of life expectancy, and don't offer a surgical option to patients older than 70 to 75.

The most recent study appears in the current issue of the journal Urology.

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