

Using steam to treat an enlarged prostate

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Prostate gland enlargement can cause uncomfortable urinary symptoms for men. And, as they age, their risk increases. Approximately 30% of men experience symptoms by age 60 and 50% of men by the time they are 80.

There are several effective treatments for an [enlarged prostate](#), including using [steam](#) to reduce the size of the prostate and alleviate symptoms.

It's a common problem for older men—[benign prostatic hyperplasia](#), or BPH.

"BPH is a fancy way of saying the prostate is getting larger, and we don't want it to," says Dr. Tobias Kohler, a Mayo Clinic urologist.

Dr. Kohler says the enlarged prostate forces the urethra to narrow, causing a variety of urination problems. And as men age, the symptoms occur more frequently. Treatment for BPH has long been medications and procedures, such as lasers or an electric loop, which burn the prostate from the inside out. But now a relatively new convective water therapy treatment uses steam to make the prostate smaller.

"For nine seconds, a steam ball is produced, and that kills all that [prostate tissue](#) that we don't want or that has grown out of control," says Dr. Kohler.

He says the procedure, performed right in the doctor's office, has a low risk for complications or sexual side effects.

"It does not carry heat outside the [prostate](#), and it does not carry heat to areas we don't want it," says Dr. Kohler.

He says this next generation of BPH treatment may soon replace the need for costly medications.

Provided by Mayo Clinic

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