

Doctor Roach response

Mr. Reisman:

I appreciate Mr. Klein's passion and I am glad he had a good outcome from proton beam treatment for prostate cancer, but antidotes are not evidence of superiority of proton beam versus intensity modulation radiation therapy. Most men will have a good result with either IMRT or proton treatment, and the only way to compare them is with a large research study. In the largest published study, over 12,000 men who underwent either proton therapy or IMRT were compared: there was no significant difference in effectiveness, and IMRT had less gastrointestinal toxicity than proton therapy.

It may be that with greater experience, proton therapy may prove to be a more effective or less toxic option, but until that research is published, I do not recommend that men insist upon proton therapy and continue to recommend men consult with their radiation oncologist to provide individual recommendations.

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