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Queen's offers new treatment for pre-cancerous esophagus conditions

Reader Submitted

The Queen's Medical Center has begun offering a new, non-surgical treatment for pre-cancerous conditions of the esophagus that national studies have found to be effective in reducing the risk for cancer development.

Results from a clinical study published in the New England Journal of Medicine reveal that ablative therapy using the HALO system (BARRX Medical, Inc.) is highly effective for complete eradication of a pre-cancerous condition of the esophagus called Barrett's esophagus afflicting more than 3.3 million Americans. Additionally, ablative therapy using the HALO system reduced the risk of progression to cancer in the highest risk cohort studied (compared to control) from 19.0% to 2.4%.

The Queen's Medical Center is the first and only program on Oahu to offer this treatment.

"The Queen's Medical Center is very proud to offer this service to the people of Oahu," said Art Ushijima, President of The Queen's Medical Center. "This new treatment will allow our gastroenterologists to better treat and manage their patients with the disease known as Barrett's esophagus."

As a result of chronic injury from gastroesophageal reflux disease, the normal esophageal lining is replaced with abnormal cells (Barrett's tissue), predisposing the patient to a higher risk for developing cancer of the esophagus. Patients with Barrett's who develop cancer, typically do so through a series of steps, starting with early Barrett's, then low-grade dysplasia or high-grade dysplasia, and then finally cancer. The present study included patients with the later stages of low- and high-grade dysplasia

"This new treatment provides a uniform and controlled ablation effect, which removes the diseased tissue and allows regrowth of normal cells," said Darlena Chadwick, RN, Queen's Vice President for Patient Care.

"Data shows that treating early cancerous changes improves the quality of life for patients living with uncertainty and fear," said Debbie Ishihara-Wong, Director of The Queen's Cancer Center and Oncology Services "Removing Barrett's at an early stage before it advances may prevent the progression to cancer of the esophagus."
