



## KIDNEY ABLATION | CLINICAL REVIEW

Renal cell carcinoma (RCC) is the ninth most common neoplasm in the USA and is rapidly increasing in prevalence worldwide<sup>1, 2</sup>. Historically, the treatment for RCC was radical nephrectomy, but partial nephrectomy became the standard of care for small tumors as it preserves renal function and therefore delays or prevents initiation of hemodialysis<sup>3, 4</sup>. More recently, tumor ablation, particularly percutaneous cryoablation, has emerged as an alternative to surgery in the treatment of RCC, specifically for early stage ( $\leq 4$  cm, localized) RCC tumors. The marked increase in volume of percutaneous ablations is likely due in large part to a growing body evidence demonstrating comparable oncologic outcomes with partial nephrectomy, but with decreased complications and preservation of renal function. Included is an overview of the key data sets.



### KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

#### OUTCOME COMPARISON

#### T1 TUMORS

#### T1B TUMORS

#### ABLATION META-ANALYSES

#### QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

#### RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

#### COST OF CARE

#### CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY

#### END NOTES



## OUTCOME COMPARISON

The scorecard: How do cryoablation and ablation compare to partial nephrectomy across key outcomes?

Metric		How does cryo/ablation compare to partial nephrectomy (PN)?	Limitation
Oncological Outcomes	Local recurrence free survival	Level 1 Data Needed	Older data, meta-analyses include RF
	Metatastic free survival	Ablation = PN	
	Cancer-specific survival	Ablation = PN	
	Overall survival	Level 1 Data Needed	Selection bias – ablation patients tend to be older with more comorbidities
Renal Function		Cryo > PN	
Safety		Cryo > PN	
Cost		Cryo > PN	
Quality of Life		Cryo > PN	
<p>Similar =   Better &gt;</p>			

KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

T1 TUMORS

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ABLATION META-ANALYSES

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COST OF CARE

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# SINGLE CENTER T1 STUDIES

Andrews et al., 2019

<b>Title</b>		Oncologic Outcomes Following Partial Nephrectomy and Percutaneous Ablation for cT1 Renal Masses					
<b>Type of Study</b>		Retrospective review of a prospectively maintained data base					
<b>Number of Patients</b>		1,798 (1422 T1a: 1055 Partial Nephrectomy, 187 Cryoablation, 180 Radiofrequency Ablation) (376 T1b: 324 Partial Nephrectomy, 52 Cryoablation)					
<b>Method</b>		Partial Nephrectomy (PN)		Cryoablation (CRYO)		Radiofrequency Ablation (RFA)	
<b>Survival Outcomes</b>		3-year <sup>23</sup>	5-year	3-year	5-year	3-year	5-year
T1a	Local recurrence free survival	98%	97.4%	98%	93.4%	98%	94.5%
	Metastatic free survival <b>a</b>	99%	98%	100%	100%	93%	93.9%
	Cancer-specific survival		99.3%		100%		95.6%
	Overall survival <b>c</b>	95%	92%	88%	77%	82%	72%
T1b	Local recurrence free survival	96%	91.6%	97%	92.7%		
	Metastatic free survival <b>b</b>	96%	94%	92%	90%		
	Cancer-specific survival		98%		91%		
	Overall survival <b>c</b>	93%	90%	74%	56%		
<b>Approach &amp; Protocol</b>		Average of 2 cryoprobes per tumor. Freeze until 5 mm margin is achieved during both freeze cycles.*					
<b>Device used</b>		Varian Perc-24 system. 2.4 mm diameter (13-gauge) probes					

- 9 minute freeze
- 10 minute thaw
- 9 minute freeze
- 10 minute active thaw

**a** Local recurrence, metastases, and cancer-specific survival were not statistically significantly different among PN, Cryo, and RFA for T1a.

**b** Local recurrence, metastases, and cancer-specific survival were not statistically significantly different among PN and Cryo for T1b

**c** Observed lower overall survival for cryo versus PN in T1a and T1b patients (p < 0.001), this is likely due to selection bias. Cryo patients were older and had higher Charlson scores.

## KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

## OUTCOME COMPARISON

### T1 TUMORS ▼

Andrews et al., 2019

Morkos et al., 2020

Breen et al., 2018

Lim et al., 2020

### T1B TUMORS

## ABLATION META-ANALYSES

## QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

## RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

## COST OF CARE

## CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY

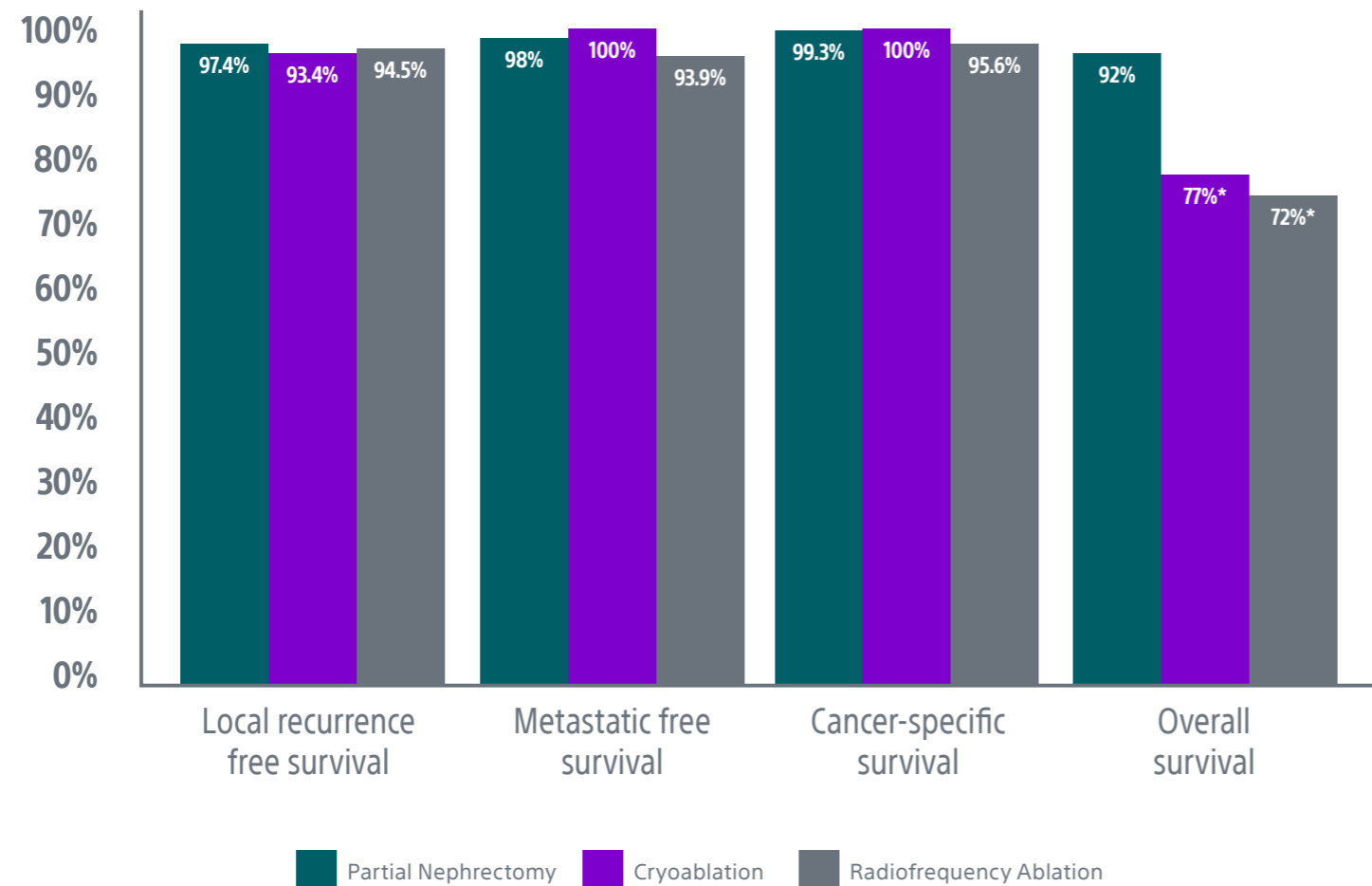


## SINGLE CENTER T1 STUDIES

### Andrews et al., 2019 | Conclusion

With mature follow-up at a single institution, percutaneous ablation appears to have acceptable results for cT1 renal tumors and is appropriate for patients with a contraindication for surgery. **For cT1a patients, clinically relevant differences between PN and ablation are unlikely and treatment choice should involve shared decision making.** For cT1b patients, death from RCC was more common with cryoablation and large differences in this outcome cannot be ruled out.

### Comparison of Oncologic Outcomes for T1a Patients at 5 Years



#### KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

#### OUTCOME COMPARISON

#### T1 TUMORS ▼

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#### T1B TUMORS

#### ABLATION META-ANALYSES

#### QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

#### RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

#### COST OF CARE

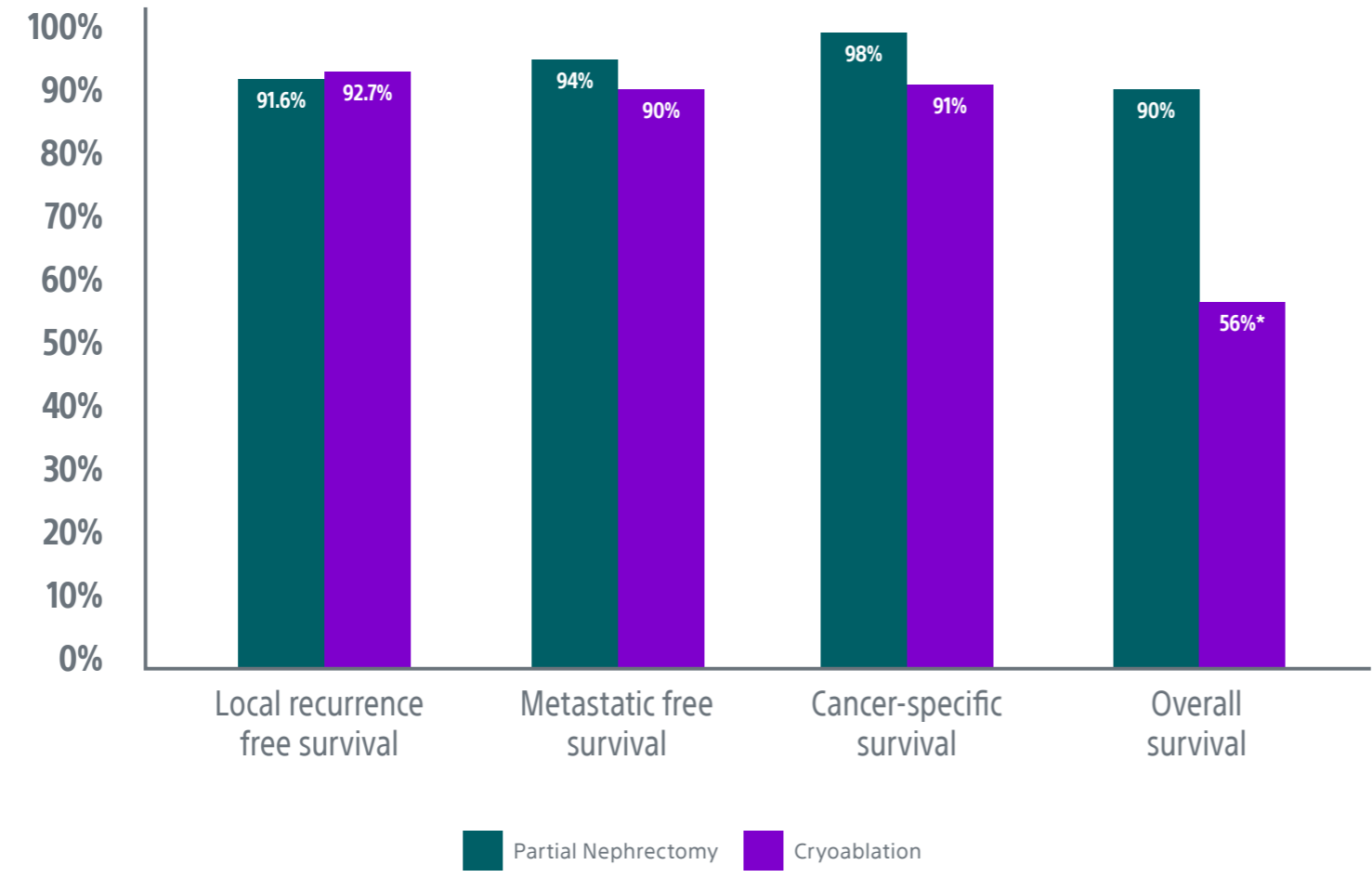
#### CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY



## SINGLE CENTER T1 STUDIES

Andrews et al., 2019 | Conclusion

Comparison of Oncologic Outcomes for T1b Patients at 5 Years



KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

T1 TUMORS ▼

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T1B TUMORS

ABLATION META-ANALYSES

QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

COST OF CARE

CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY



# SINGLE CENTER T1 STUDIES

Morkos et al., 2020

<b>Title</b>	Percutaneous Cryoablation for Stage 1 Renal Cell Carcinoma: Outcomes from a 10-year Prospective Study and Comparison with Matched Cohorts from the National Cancer Database					
<b>Type of Study</b>	Prospective observational study. Single center.					
<b>Number of Patients</b>	134					
<b>Method</b>	Percutaneous Cryoablation (PCA)		Partial Nephrectomy (PN)		Radical Nephrectomy (RN)	
<b>Survival Outcomes (primary objectives)</b>	5-year	10-year	5-year	10-year	5-year	10-year
<b>Recurrence free survival</b>	85%	69%				
<b>Disease-specific survival</b>	94%	<b>94%</b>	10 year disease specific survival of 94% is comparable to that reported for surgical interventions			
<b>Overall survival</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>72%</b>	78%	49%	67%	43%
	PCA group outperformed both PN and RN subgroups in overall survival at both 5 and 10 years, a trend that became more pronounced for patients with comorbidities (higher CDCC scores).					
<b>Other Outcomes (secondary objectives)</b>						
<b>Risk for metachronous RCC</b>	6%					
<b>Risk for hemodialysis</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	Comparable to that reported in literature for surgical treatments, which ranges from 2.5%-2.7%				
<b>Rate of complications</b>	8%	Low compared to reported surgical complications				
<b>Approach and Protocol</b>	<p>Biopsy planned at the time of ablation unless patient had prior diagnostic biopsy. Objective to generate iceball extending 5 mm beyond tumor margin. Baseline non contrast CT obtained with patient prone. If nontarget organ was within iceball, 22-gauge spinal needle inserted between RCC and that organ provided air and/or hydrodissection.</p> <p>10 minute freeze → 8 minute thaw → 10 minute re-freeze</p>					

## KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

## OUTCOME COMPARISON

### T1 TUMORS ▼

Andrews et al., 2019

**Morkos et al., 2020**

Breen et al., 2018

Lim et al., 2020

### T1B TUMORS

## ABLATION META-ANALYSES

## QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

## RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

## COST OF CARE

## CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY

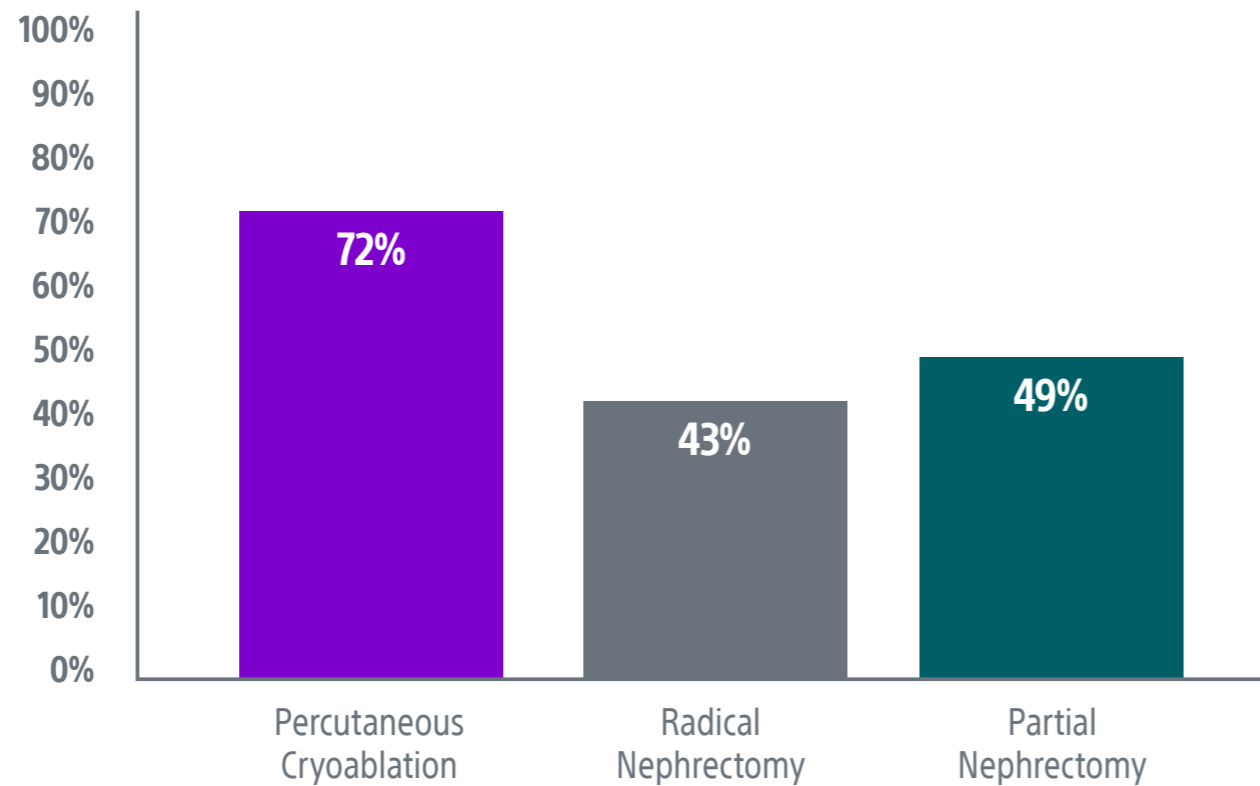


## SINGLE CENTER T1 STUDIES

### Morkos et al., 2020 | Conclusion

Biopsy-proven renal cell carcinoma showed that **percutaneous cryoablation was associated with a high disease-specific survival (94%) and better overall survival compared with partial or radical nephrectomy at 10 years.**

Overall Survival at 10 Years



KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

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T1B TUMORS

ABLATION META-ANALYSES

QUALITY OF LIFE  
AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

COST OF CARE

CRYOABLATION AND  
IMMUNOTHERAPY



## SINGLE CENTER T1 STUDIES

Breen et al., 2018

<b>Title</b>	Image-guided Cryoablation for Sporadic Renal Cell Carcinoma: Three- and 5-year Outcomes in 220 Patients with Biopsy-proven Renal Cell Carcinoma	
<b>Type of Study</b>	Retrospective evaluation of prospectively maintained database. Single center.	
<b>Number of Patients</b>	433 patients undergoing cryoablation with 220 patients with biopsy-proved RCC and > 3-month follow-up	
<b>Survival outcomes for biopsy-proven RCC with &gt; 3-month follow-up (220)</b>	3-year	5-year
<b>Local recurrence free survival</b>	97.2%	93.9%
<b>Metastatic free survival</b>	97.7%	94.4%
<b>Overall survival</b>	93.2%	84.8%
<b>Outcomes for all patients (433)</b>		
<b>Treatment efficacy after primary ablation (no residual enhancing tumor by 3 months)</b>	453/474 tumors – 95.6%	
<b>Overall treatment efficacy after secondary ablation</b>	465/474 tumors – 98.1%	
<b>Major complication rate</b>	Transfusions and embolizations due to complications were significantly lower than previous publications by the same group. This was attributed to use of 17 G Boston Scientific probes compared to thicker probes from competitors.	23/473 procedures – 4.9%
<b>Overall survival</b>	91.7% at 3 years, 78.8% at 5 years	
<b>Mean hospital stay</b>	1 day for Cryo, 4 days for PN	
<b>Approach and Protocol</b>	All patients in prone-oblique position. Average of 4, 17-gauge probes used per procedure. Tinted saline hydro dissection for displacement of critical structures (bowel, pancreatic tail) in 47% of procedures. CT monitoring at 4 min intervals to ensure extension of iceball 5 mm beyond tumor margin	
<b>Device Used</b>	17-gauge Boston Scientific needles	

Larger tumors (T1b) did not have a lower local recurrence-free survival rate compared to T1a tumors.

- 10 minute freeze
- 8 minute thaw
- 10 minute freeze

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### OUTCOME COMPARISON

#### T1 TUMORS ▼

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#### T1B TUMORS

### ABLATION META-ANALYSES

### QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

### RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

### COST OF CARE

### CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY

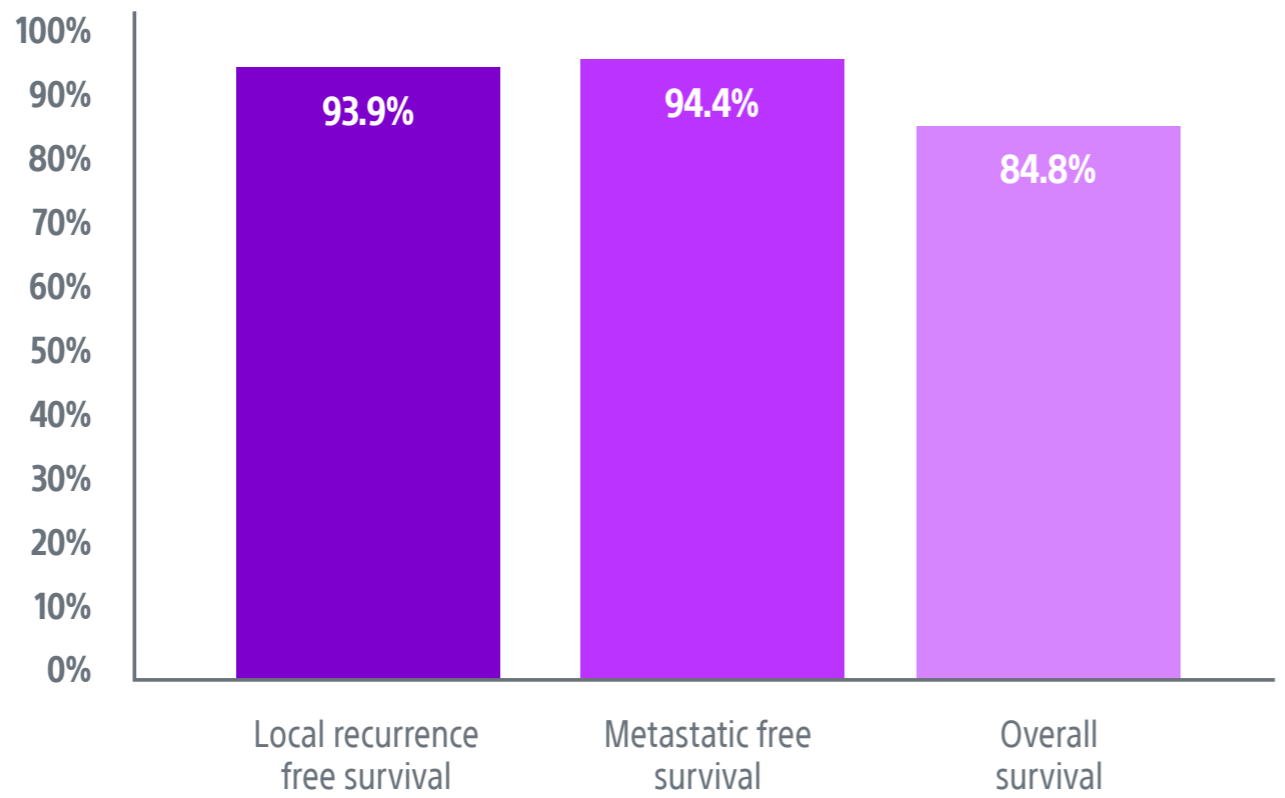


## SINGLE CENTER T1 STUDIES

### Breen et al., 2018 | Conclusion

Oncologic outcomes of image-guided renal cryoablation for RCC are competitive with those of partial nephrectomy and are associated with a low complication rate. While active surveillance is common, particularly in elderly patients with small tumors and reasonable life expectancies, it is predicated on the risk of surgery. Given the low complication rate associated with cryoablation, renal **cryoablation may present a useful, less-invasive treatment option for these patients.**

**Oncologic Outcomes for Cryoablation at 5 Years for Biopsy-Proven RCC**



KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

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Andrews et al., 2019

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T1B TUMORS

ABLATION META-ANALYSES

QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

COST OF CARE

CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY



## SINGLE CENTER T1 STUDIES

Lim et al., 2020

<b>Title</b>	Outcomes of Renal Tumors Treated by Image-Guided Percutaneous Cryoablation: Immediate and 3- and 5-Year Outcomes at a Regional Center	
<b>Type of Study</b>	Retrospective review of a prospectively maintained databased. Regional center.	
<b>Number of Patients</b>	180 (168 T1a, 17 T1b)	
<b>Oncologic Outcomes</b>	3-year	5-year
Local recurrence free survival	98.3%	94.9%
Metastatic free survival	100%	100%
Disease-specific survival	100%	100%
<b>Other Outcomes</b>		
Technical success (iceball coverage of 5 mm beyond tumor margin)	98.9%	
Major complication rate (Clavien-Dindo > grade III)	2.2% Bleed from lumbar artery Bleed in collecting system Pneumothorax Pulmonary embolus	
Renal function	No significant difference in eGFR before and immediately after procedure, or a 2-year follow-up.	
<b>Approach and Protocol</b>	<p>CT scans at 5 and 10 minutes to monitor iceball and assess complications.</p>	
<b>Device Used</b>	17-gauge Boston Scientific needles	

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### OUTCOME COMPARISON

#### T1 TUMORS ▼

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#### T1B TUMORS

### ABLATION META-ANALYSES

### QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

### RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

### COST OF CARE

### CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY

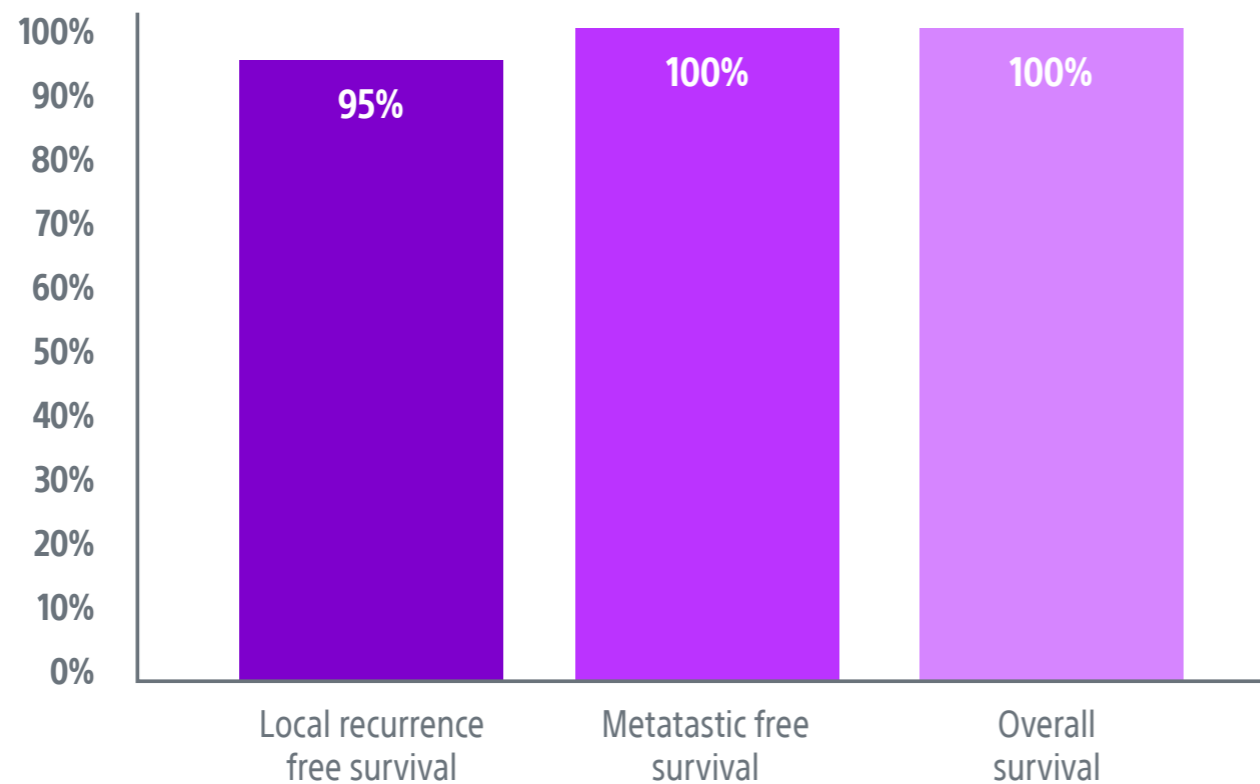


## SINGLE CENTER T1 STUDIES

Lim et al., 2020 | Conclusion

In conclusion, image-guided cryoablation offers a promising treatment option for cT1 RCC, **offering long-term oncologic outcomes that rival more invasive methods with the benefit of an improved safety profile.**

Oncologic Outcomes at 3 and 5 Years



KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

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T1B TUMORS

ABLATION META-ANALYSES

QUALITY OF LIFE  
AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

COST OF CARE

CRYOABLATION AND  
IMMUNOTHERAPY



## SINGLE CENTER T1B STUDIES

Gunn et al., 2019

<b>Title</b>	Percutaneous Cryoablation of Stage T1b Renal Cell Carcinoma: Safety, Technical Results, and Clinical Outcomes		
<b>Type of Study</b>	Retrospective review. Single center.		
<b>Number of Patients</b>	37		
<b>Oncologic Outcomes</b>	1-year	2-year	3-year
Recurrence-free survival	96.5%	86.1%	62.6% <sup>a</sup>
Cancer-specific survival	100%	100%	100%
Overall survival	96.7%	91.8%	77.6% <sup>b</sup>
<b>Other Outcomes</b>	88.2% Technical success (coverage of lesion by iceball and absence of enhancement or tumor enlargement within 3 months of ablation)		
<b>Complications</b>	16.2% complications CIRSE grade 2 or above. <sup>c</sup>		
<b>Approach &amp; Protocol</b>	Median number of probes used: 3 Mean number of cryoablation procedures per patient: 1.5 Pre-ablation biopsy performed in 62.2% of patients Angio-embolization used in 8.1% of patients Hydro-dissection in 5.4% of patients	10 minute freeze 8 minute thaw 10 minute freeze Active thaw	
<b>Device Used</b>	IceForce™ 2.1 mm, IcePearl™ 2.1 mm, IceSphere™ 1.5 mm, IceRod™ 1.5 mm (Boston Scientific), Perc-24 2.4 (Varian)		

<sup>a</sup> Current guidelines note that thermal ablation of larger tumors should be utilized with caution due to higher rates of local recurrence compared to partial nephrectomy. However, these guidelines are based largely on experience with laparoscopic cryoablation and RFA rather than percutaneous cryoablation (see citations)

<sup>b</sup> Charlson comorbidity index was the only variable associated with overall survival

<sup>c</sup> Complications not associated with tumor size or number of cryoablation probes. The variables associated with complications were: endophytic/mixed tumors, involvement of renal sinus, and displacement/infiltration of collecting system. Endophytic/mixed tumors were 12x more likely to have complications than exophytic. Patients with tumors involving renal sinus were 6x more likely to experience an adverse event.

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### OUTCOME COMPARISON

### T1 TUMORS

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Gunn et al., 2019

Shimizu et al., 2021

Hebbadj et al., 2017

### ABLATION META-ANALYSES

### QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

### RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

### COST OF CARE

### CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY

### END NOTES

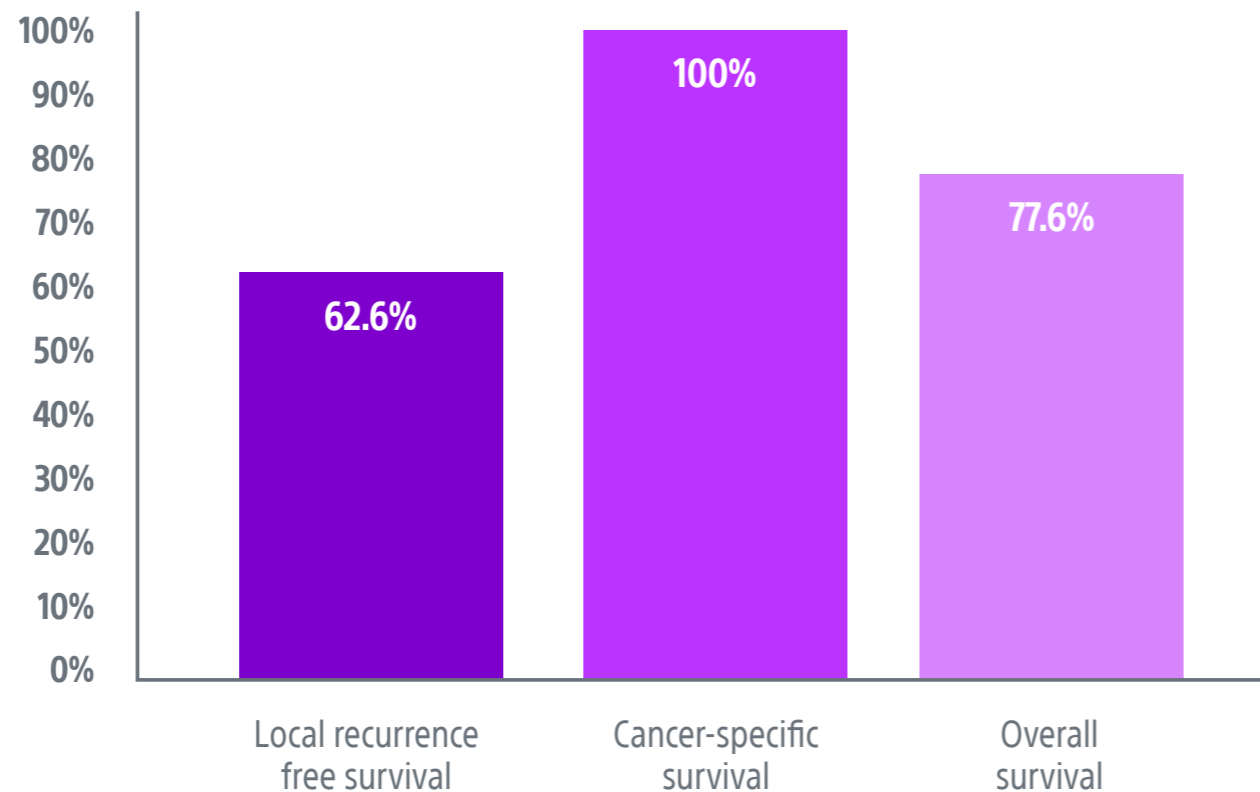


## SINGLE CENTER T1B STUDIES

### Gunn et al., 2019 | Conclusion

Percutaneous cryoablation is a viable option for T1b RCC with low rates of high-grade complications. Local recurrence remains a concern in the cryoablation of these tumors, however high rates of technical success may be achieved with excellent cancer-specific survival at 1, 2, and 3 years.

**Oncologic Outcomes at 3 Years (T1b)**



KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

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T1 TUMORS

**T1B TUMORS ▼**

Gunn et al., 2019

Shimizu et al., 2021

Hebbadj et al., 2017

ABLATION META-ANALYSES

QUALITY OF LIFE  
AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

COST OF CARE

CRYOABLATION AND  
IMMUNOTHERAPY

END NOTES



## SINGLE CENTER T1B STUDIES

Shimizu et al., 2021

<b>Title</b>	Image-guided percutaneous cryoablation of T1b renal cell carcinomas in patients with comorbidities			
<b>Type of Study</b>	Retrospective review. Single center.			
<b>Number of Patients</b>	28			
<b>Oncologic Outcomes</b>	1-year	2-year	3-year	5-year
Local recurrence-free survival	92.7%	92.7%	92.7%	92.7%
Disease-free survival	89.1%	85.4%	85.4%	85.4%
Overall survival	96.3%	96.3%	92.3%	79.1%
<b>Other Outcomes</b>	Patients were classified into either high-risk or low-risk cohorts, based on their Charlson Comorbidity Index (ACCI) and their Renal Nephrometry Scores (RNS). This study found no significant difference in overall survival, local recurrence-free survival, and disease-free survival between the high and low-risk group.			
<b>Technical success (complete tumor ablation)</b>	96.4% 27/28 patients had complete tumor ablation after first procedure. The 1 patient received second ablation procedure resulting in complete ablation of the tumor.			
<b>Renal Function</b>	This study found that having only a single kidney was the only risk factor in predicting worsening renal function after percutaneous cryoablation.			
<b>Approach &amp; Protocol</b>				
<b>Device Used</b>	17-gauge Boston Scientific			

KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

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Gunn et al., 2019

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Hebbadj et al., 2017

ABLATION META-ANALYSES

QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

COST OF CARE

CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY

END NOTES

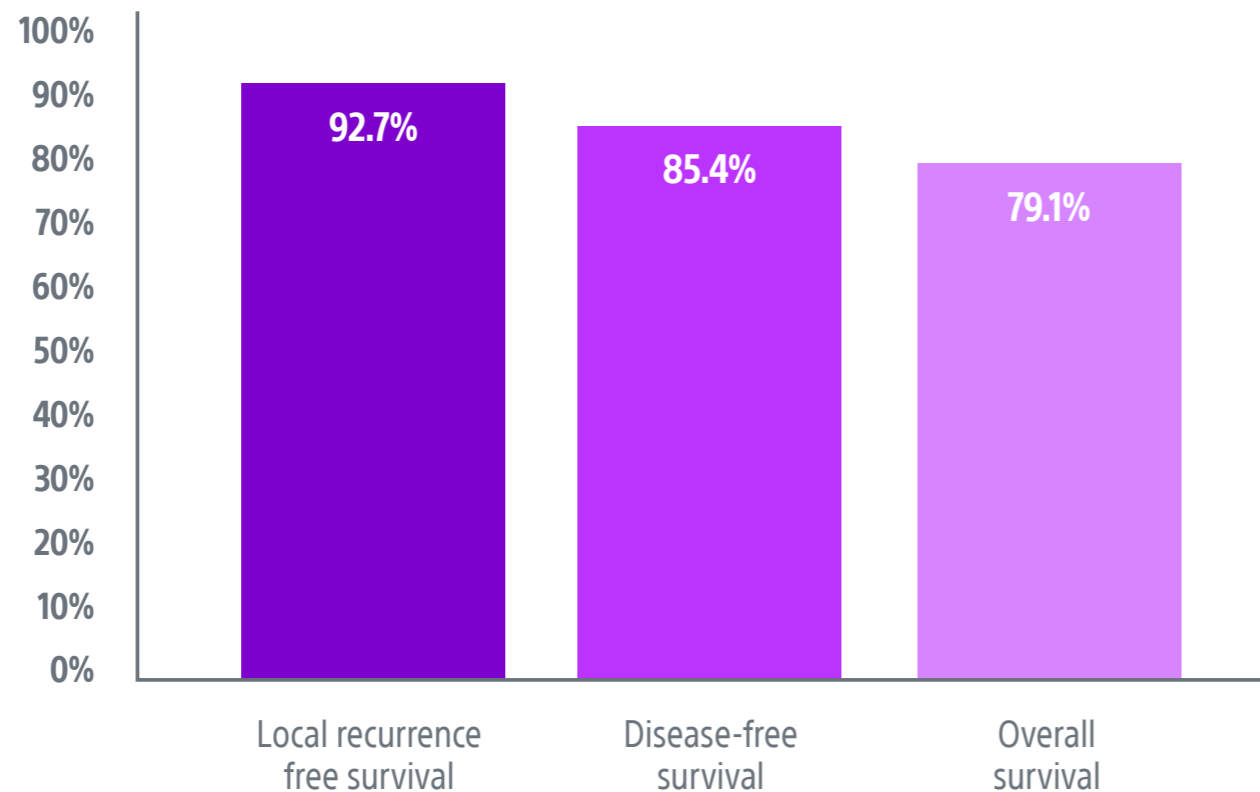


## SINGLE CENTER T1B STUDIES

### Shimizu et al., 2021 | Conclusion

PCA is a safe and feasible nephron-sparing treatment for stage T1b RCCs, although some patients require a large number of cryoneedles or repeat PCA. Even patients with multiple comorbidities can achieve local tumor control similar to that of low-risk patients.

**Oncologic Outcomes at 5 Years (T1b)**



KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

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Gunn et al., 2019

Shimizu et al., 2021

Hebbadj et al., 2017

ABLATION META-ANALYSES

QUALITY OF LIFE  
AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

COST OF CARE

CRYOABLATION AND  
IMMUNOTHERAPY

END NOTES



## SINGLE CENTER T1B STUDIES

Hebbaj et al., 2017

<b>Title</b>	Safety Considerations and Local Tumor Control Following Percutaneous Image-Guided Cryoablation of T1b Renal Tumors		
<b>Type of Study</b>	Retrospective review. Single center.		
<b>Number of Patients</b>	27		
<b>Oncologic Outcomes</b>	1-year	2-year	3-year
Local tumor control	82.6%	72.3%	60.3% <sup>a</sup>
Cancer-specific survival	95.7%	95.7%	95.7%
<b>Other Outcomes</b>	<b>Technical efficacy (no contrast enhancement and no enlargement of ablation area at 3 months)</b> <b>87.5%</b> In 3 non-efficacious cases, 1 received PN, 1 received repeat ablation with complete efficacy, and 1 was lost to follow-up after 3 months		
<b>Complications</b>	11.1% experienced complications grade 2 or above on the Clavien-Dindo scale		
<b>Approach &amp; Protocol</b>	Mean number of probes used: 5.3 Embolization used in 33.3% of patients Hydro-dissection in 77.8% of patients		 
<b>Device Used</b>	IceForce, IceSphere, IceRod, IceEdge (Boston Scientific)		

<sup>a</sup> LRFS decreased at 3 years, but few patients completed follow up at 3 years.

KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

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Gunn et al., 2019

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ABLATION META-ANALYSES

QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

COST OF CARE

CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY

END NOTES

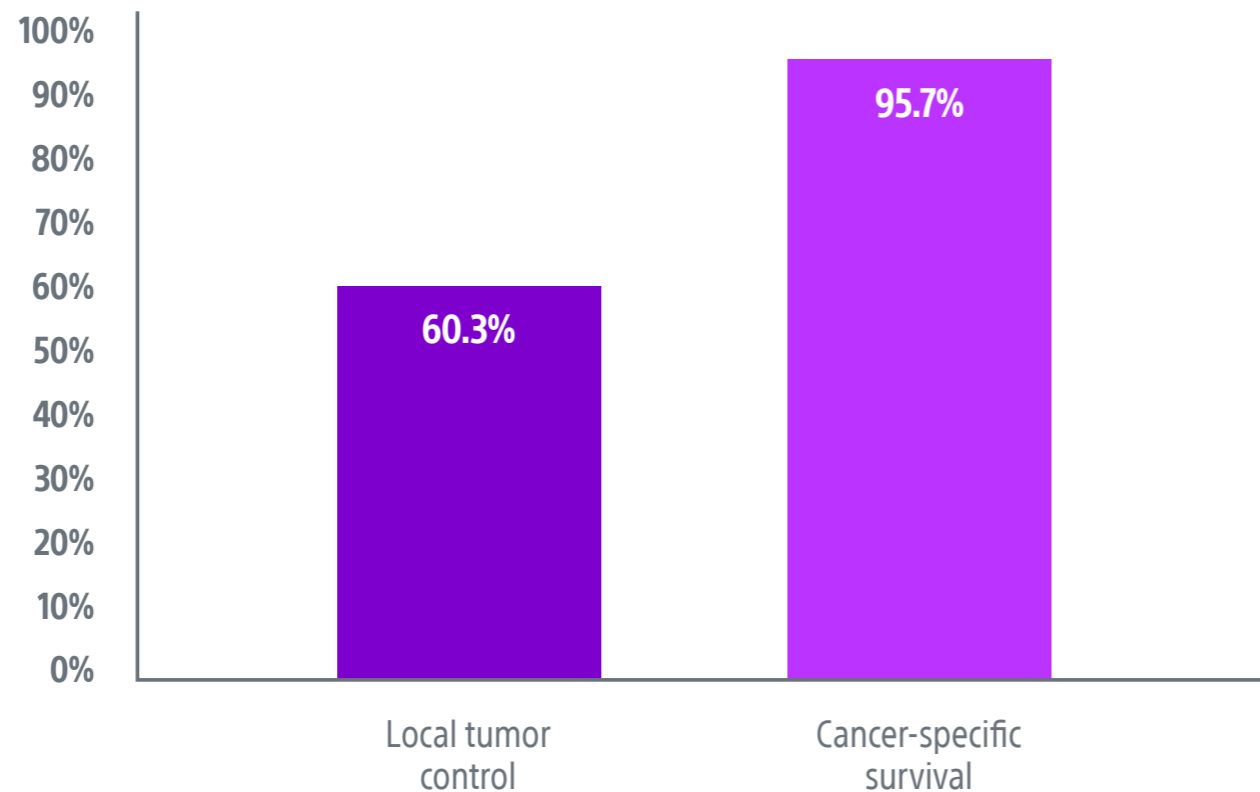


## SINGLE CENTER T1B STUDIES

### Hebbaj et al., 2017 | Conclusion

Early oncological efficacy of T1b renal tumors undergoing percutaneous CA was confirmed with acceptable complication rates. Due to the lack of prospective randomized studies comparing the outcome of CA to PN, the former should be still strictly proposed to “non-surgical” candidates presenting with T1b renal tumors; hence, further studies are mandatory to confirm the long-term efficacy of this procedure.

Oncologic Outcomes at 3 Years (T1b)



KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

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ABLATION META-ANALYSES

QUALITY OF LIFE  
AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

COST OF CARE

CRYOABLATION AND  
IMMUNOTHERAPY

END NOTES



# META ANALYSES AND DATABASE POPULATION STUDIES

Chan et al., 2022

<b>Title</b>		<b>Ablative therapies versus partial nephrectomy for small renal masses - A systematic review and meta-analysis</b>
<b>Type of Study</b>		Systematic review and meta-analysis
<b>Number of Patients</b>		<b>31 studies reporting on 74,946 patients</b>
<b>Results</b>		
<b>T1a</b>	<b>Cancer-specific survival (7 studies, 4,181 patients)</b>	CSS for AT similar to PN (HR 0.68, p = 0.10) No significant differences nor heterogeneities observed between different AT treatment modalities
	<b>Overall survival (11 studies, 17,002 patients)</b>	OS significantly worse in AT compared to PN (HR 1.64, p < 0.001) However, this difference is mainly due to the significant older age of AT cohorts compared to the PN cohort (Mean Difference 5.70, p < 0.001)
	<b>Local recurrence-free survival (13 studies, 3,211 patients)</b>	LRFS for AT significantly worse compared to PN (HR 2.55, p < 0.001) However, when only studies with follow-up over five years were included, LRFS was no longer significantly different between AT and PN (HR 1.54, p = 0.131)
	<b>Metastatic-free survival (5 studies, 3,076 patients)</b>	MFS for AT similar to PN (HR 1.01, p = 0.98)
	<b>Disease-free survival (6 studies, 1,320 patients)</b>	DFS for AT similar to PN (HR 1.44, p = 0.18)
	<b>Post-operative complications (16 studies, 4,815 patients)</b>	AT has significantly lower risk in developing any post-operative complications compared to PN. However, percutaneous ablation seems to have similar rates of complications compared to PN (Risk Ratio 0.93, p = 0.74).
	<b>Change in estimated glomerular flow rate (eGFR) post-operatively (6 studies, 887 patients)</b>	Decreases in eGFR significantly smaller for AT compared to PN (Mean Difference - 7.42, p = 0.01)
<b>T1b</b>	<b>Cancer-specific survival (7 studies)</b>	Similar for AT and PN in both matched and long-term follow-up cohorts. However, one exception (Pecocraro et al.) noted cancer-specific mortality worse for AT compared to PN (HR 2.50, p = 0.03)
	<b>Overall survival (7 studies)</b>	Similar between AT and PN in most studies, contradicting Andrews et al.
	<b>Local recurrence-free survival (4 studies)</b>	2 studies showed LRFS for AT similar to PN 2 studies showed LRFS for percutaneous cryoablation significantly worse compared to PN
	<b>Post-operative complications (6 studies, 598 patients)</b>	AT and PN have similar overall, minor, and major complication rates (Risk Ratio 0.97, p = 0.91)

**Conclusion:** AT have similar long-term oncological durability; lower rates of complications and superior kidney function preservation compared to PN. Given the low quality of evidence, AT is a reasonable alternative to PN in frail and co-morbid patients. Long-term high-quality studies are needed to confirm the potential benefits of AT, especially in T1b patients.

KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

T1 TUMORS

T1B TUMORS

**ABLATION META-ANALYSES ▼**

Chan et al., 2022

Xing et al., 2018

Yoon et al., 2018

Pierorazio et al., 2016

QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

COST OF CARE

CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY



# META ANALYSES AND DATABASE POPULATION STUDIES

Xing et al., 2018

Title		Comparative Effectiveness of Thermal Ablation, Surgical Resection, and Active Surveillance for T1a Renal Cell Carcinoma: A Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) Medicare-linked Population Study								
Type of Study		Medicare SEER database analysis								
Number of Patients		10,218								
Cohort	Method	No. Patients	Cancer-Specific Survival	3-year	5-year	9-year	Overall Survival	3-year	5-year	9-year
a PN vs TA	PN	691		98.3%	97.4%	96.4%		95.5%	92.6%	91.1%
	TA	691		97.6%	96.7%	96.3%		92.9%	89.3%	88.6%
RN vs TA	RN	733		97.0%	96.5%	96.1%		94.5%	91.8%	90.5%
	TA	733		97.1%	96.4%	96.0%		93.9%	92.0%	91.3%
b AS vs TA	AS	647		96.0%	95.5%	95.4%		87.0%	85.3%	84.1%
	TA	647		97.7%	96.9%	96.8%		94.0%	92.6%	91.8%

**Other data worth calling out:** “When compared with patients in the TA group, patients in the PN group had increased rates of renal, cardiovascular, and thromboembolic events by approximately 2.1-, 2.3-, and 5.3-fold, respectively (P< .001 for all) in the first 30 days after the procedure. These differences decreased but remained significant at 31 days to 1 year after the procedure for renal (P< .001), cardiovascular (P< .001), and thromboembolic (P< .001) events.”

**Conclusion:** For T1aN0M0 RCC, thermal ablation confers cancer-specific survival and overall survival similar to those seen with surgical management, with significantly fewer adverse outcomes at 1-year after the procedure and similar rates of secondary cancer events compared with surgery.

**a** Thermal ablation had statistically similar survival compared with partial nephrectomy or radical nephrectomy. These similarities held true in subgroup analyses of older (age >75 years) and higher-risk (age >75 years and Charlson comorbidity index > 2) patient cohorts. **THUS --> In elderly patients with nonmetastatic node-negative renal cell carcinoma 4 cm in diameter or smaller, thermal ablation should be considered an equivalent therapeutic option to surgery**

**b** Active surveillance had significantly lower cancer-specific survival and overall survival when compared with thermal ablation and partial nephrectomy. **THUS --> In elderly patients with nonmetastatic node-negative renal cell carcinoma 4 cm in diameter or smaller, thermal ablation confers survival benefits when compared with active surveillance**

KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

T1 TUMORS

T1B TUMORS

ABLATION META-ANALYSES ▼

Chan et al., 2022

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QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

COST OF CARE

CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY



## META ANALYSES AND DATABASE POPULATION STUDIES

Yoon et al., 2018

<b>Title</b>	Focal therapy versus robot-assisted partial nephrectomy in the management of clinical T1 renal masses
<b>Type of Study</b>	Systematic review and meta-analysis
<b>Number of Patients</b>	7 studies, reporting on 1,166 patients
<b>Results</b>	
<b>Oncologic outcomes</b>	
Local recurrence rate (7 studies)	FT had significantly increased risk of local recurrence (p < 0.001) <sup>a</sup>
Distant metastasis rate (3 studies)	FT had significantly increased risk of distant metastases (p = 0.006) <sup>b</sup>
<b>Perioperative outcomes</b>	FT had lower estimated blood loss (EBL) compared to RPN (p < 0.001) Operative time and lengths of stay were similar between FT and RPN FT had lower overall complication rates compared to RPN (but not statistically significant p = 0.39) FT had lower major complication rate compared to RPN (but not statistically significant p = 0.61)
<b>Functional outcomes</b>	FT associated with significantly low decrease of estimated glomerular flow rate (eGFR) compared to RPN (p = 0.04)

**Conclusion:** RPN has a substantial advantage in oncologic control, such as local recurrence and distant metastasis. However, in the era of minimally invasive surgery, FT has the advantage in renal function preservation and is associated with less bleeding.

<sup>a</sup> HOWEVER, 2 propensity score matched studies that paired patients with similar basic characteristics showed no difference in local recurrence between RPN and FT.

<sup>b</sup> HOWEVER, overall follow-up period was longer in the FT group, which could result in bias regarding relatively high metastatic recurrence. Notes that when secondary efficacy is included (second ablation), risk of recurrence is reduced.

KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

T1 TUMORS

T1B TUMORS

ABLATION META-ANALYSES ▼

Chan et al., 2022

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Yoon et al., 2018

Pierorazio et al., 2016

QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

COST OF CARE

CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY



## META ANALYSES AND DATABASE POPULATION STUDIES

Pierorazio et al., 2016

<b>Title</b>	<b>Management of Renal Masses and Localized Renal Cancer: Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis</b>			
<b>Type of Study</b>	Meta analysis			
<b>Number of Studies</b>	107			
<b>Results</b>				
<b>Cancer Specific Survival</b>	95-100% across all management strategies (RN, PN, TA), with no significant differences among different treatments.			
<b>Metastasis-Free Survival</b>	90.5%-100% across all management strategies (RN, PN, TA), with no significant differences among different treatment modalities.			
<b>Local Recurrence-Free Survival</b>	RN vs TA (2 studies) <span style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 2px;">a RN 97.4% and 100%</span>		PN vs TA (14 studies) <span style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 2px;">TA 81% and 93%</span> <span style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 2px;">PN median 98.9% (IQR 94.6% to 100%)</span> <span style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 2px;">TA median 93.0% (IQR 89.9% to 96%)</span>	
<b>Overall Survival</b>	TA and AS had decreased overall survival outcomes compared to RN and PN. However, many studies recognize that patients undergoing TA and AS are older and have multiple comorbidities compared to those undergoing RN or PN. In addition, patients undergoing thermal ablation or active surveillance are unsuitable for extirpative surgery.			
<b>Renal Function</b>	RN caused a greater decrease in estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR) following surgery compared to TA. Risk of stage 3 chronic kidney disease was 3.48-fold higher with RN compared to TA. Renal function outcomes were similar between PN and TA.			
<b>Perioperative Outcomes and Harms</b>	TA had the most favorable perioperative outcomes: fewer conversions to open or radical surgery, shorter length of stay, less estimated blood loss, fewer blood transfusions. Minor and major complications were similar for RN, PN, and TA.			

**Other data worth noting:** Study found that differences in overall survival and cancer-specific survival were largely driven by patient and tumor characteristics, rather than by which treatment they received. Data that indicated age, tumor size, and tumor grade was the greatest predictor of cancer specific survival. Data that indicated age and comorbidities was the greatest predictor of overall survival.

**Conclusion:** Comparative studies reveal similar cancer specific survival across management strategies, with some differences in renal functional outcomes, perioperative outcomes and postoperative harms that should be considered when choosing a management strategy. Further research and data are needed to strengthen many aspects of the evidence base.

**a** TA lower than both RN and PN in LRFS. However, when considering secondary ablation, LRFS rates increased to 95%-100% and differences between PN and TA were no longer significant.

KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

T1 TUMORS

T1B TUMORS

**ABLATION META-ANALYSES** ▼

Chan et al., 2022

Xing et al., 2018

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**Pierorazio et al., 2016**

QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

COST OF CARE

CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY



## RENAL FUNCTION PRESERVATION, SAFETY, AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Junker et al., 2022

### Quality of life and complications after nephron-sparing treatment of renal cell carcinoma stage T1-a systematic review

Junker and colleagues conducted a meta-analysis on 11 studies that examined quality of life and complications following nephron-sparing treatment of T1 RCC.

- All cryo patients returned to baseline QoL 12 months after procedure
- Across studies, **complication rate up to 20% after partial nephrectomy and up to 12.5% after ablation therapy.**

**Conclusion:** Nephron-sparing treatment appears to be superior or comparable to other treatment alternatives with regard to QoL outcomes. Partial nephrectomy appears to have a higher complication rate compared with ablation therapies.

Complication rate for  
partial nephrectomy

**20%**

Complication rate after  
ablation therapy

**12.5%**

KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

T1 TUMORS

T1B TUMORS

ABLATION META-ANALYSES

QUALITY OF LIFE  
AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

COST OF CARE

CRYOABLATION AND  
IMMUNOTHERAPY

END NOTES



# RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

Rosenberg et al., 2011

<b>Title</b>	<b>Percutaneous Cryoablation of Renal Lesions With Radiographic Ice Ball Involvement of the Renal Sinus: Analysis of Hemorrhagic and Collecting System Complications</b>
<b>Type of Study</b>	Retrospective review. Single Center.
<b>Overview</b>	The purpose of this study was to determine incidence of collecting system and hemorrhagic complications resulting from CT-guided percutaneous cryoablation of renal tumors in which radiographic iceball abuts or involves the renal sinus
<b>Patients</b>	<b>107 patients, 129 percutaneous renal cryoablation procedures.</b>  In n = 67 (52%) cases, iceball directly abutted or extended into renal sinus. These were considered central ablations and were included in this study. Mean overlap 6.2 mm. In 41 cases (32%), overlap was 6 mm or more. Mean tumor size 2.5 cm. In n = 62 (48%) procedures, 1 mm margin between iceball and renal sinus. These were deemed noncentral ablations.
<b>Approach &amp; Protocol</b>	In n = 14 cases, bowel was close to lesion of interest. Hydrodissection was performed with 18-gauge needle between bowel loop and lesion under CT guidance. Mean number of cryoprobes used for central ablations was 2.5.  <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 5px;"> <div style="background-color: #004a7c; color: white; padding: 2px 10px; border-radius: 10px; display: inline-block;">10 minute freeze</div> <div style="background-color: #800080; color: white; padding: 2px 10px; border-radius: 10px; display: inline-block;">8 minute thaw</div> <div style="background-color: #004a7c; color: white; padding: 2px 10px; border-radius: 10px; display: inline-block;">10 minute freeze</div> </div> CT performed during late stage of initial freeze
<b>Results/adverse events</b>	No cases of collecting system injury were identified for any ablation as evidence by urinoma, collecting system fistula, caliectasis, pelvocaliectasis due to collecting system stricture. One patient had a significant hematoma during treatment, requiring transcatheter embolization. Follow up inspection showed that hematoma formed during probe positioning and was due to arterial injury from probe tip rather than actual cryoablation.
<b>Recurrence</b>	n = 7 patients (6%) had radiologic evidence of residual recurrent tumor manifesting abnormally and requiring repeat ablation.
<b>Device Used</b>	2.4 mm diameter (13.5 gauge) Perc-24 by Varian

**Conclusion:** Cryoablation does not cause serious injury to the collecting system and renal blood system. This is in contrast to numerous reported complications associated with radiofrequency ablation (RFA) near or in the renal sinus.

KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

T1 TUMORS

T1B TUMORS

ABLATION META-ANALYSES

QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

**RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM**

COST OF CARE

CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY

END NOTES



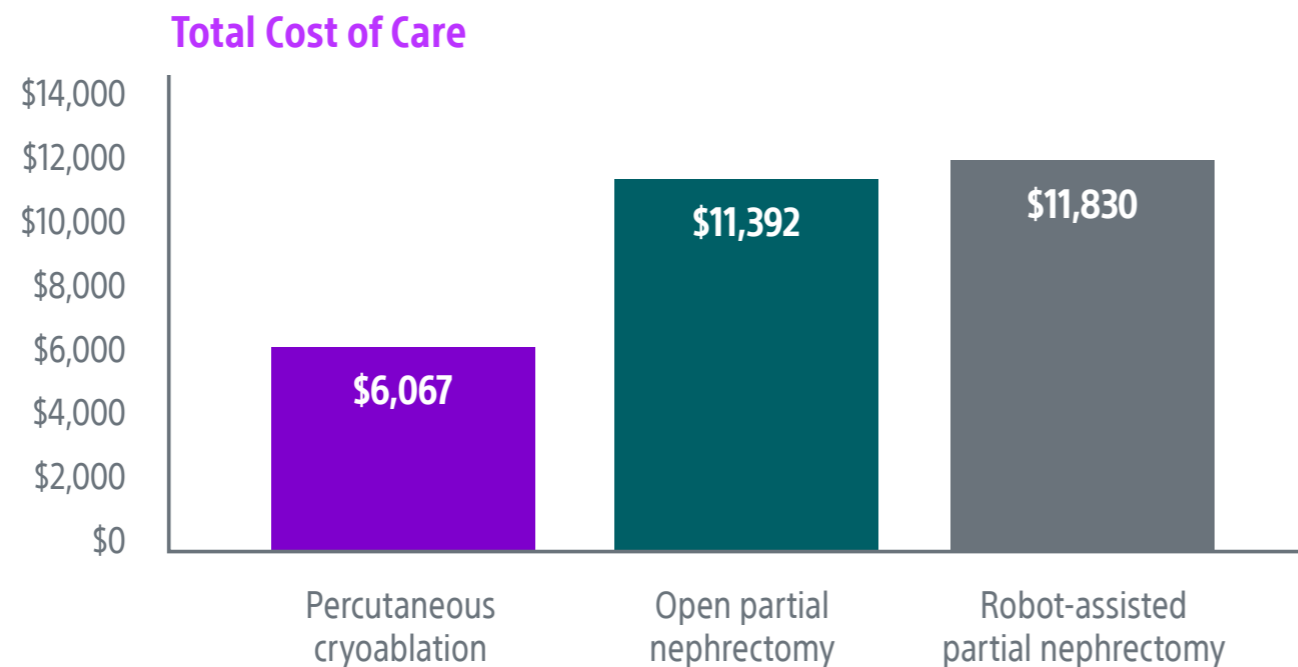
## COST CONSIDERATIONS, REIMBURSEMENT, AND TRENDS

Chebab et al., 2016

### Percutaneous Cryoablation vs Partial Nephrectomy: Cost Comparison of T1a Tumors

**Purpose:** To compare cost of percutaneous cryoablation vs open and robot-assisted partial nephrectomy of T1a renal masses from the hospital perspective. Chebab et al., retrospectively compared cost of 37 percutaneous cryoablations, 26 open partial nephrectomies, and 102 robot-assisted partial nephrectomies. Total cost was the sum of direct and indirect costs.

Cost data included procedure/operating room fees, supplies and devices, imaging, anesthesia fees, recovery room fees, room and board, ICU room and board, respiratory care, laboratory, and pathology fees.



KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

T1 TUMORS

T1B TUMORS

ABLATION META-ANALYSES

QUALITY OF LIFE  
AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

**COST OF CARE ▼**

Chebab et al., 2016

Patel et al., 2021

CRYOABLATION AND  
IMMUNOTHERAPY

END NOTES



## COST CONSIDERATIONS, REIMBURSEMENT, AND TRENDS

Chebab et al., 2016 Percutaneous cryoablation is roughly half as costly as robot-assisted partial nephrectomy.

Variable	Median	Mean	Standard deviation	Statistics
<b>Surgical supplies and devices</b>				
Cryoablation	\$2,596	\$2,772	\$550	Cryoablation vs open: p<0.0001 Cryoablation vs robot: p=0.002
Open	\$1,352	\$1,445	\$630	
Robot	\$3,207	\$3,288	\$1,417	
<b>Operating room</b>				
Cryoablation	\$1,516	\$1,770	\$1,864	Cryoablation vs open: p≤0.0001 Cryoablation vs robot: p<0.0001
Open	\$3,272	\$3,494	\$700	
Robot	\$3,254	\$3,280	\$707	
<b>Imaging</b>				
Cryoablation	\$0	\$179	\$366	Cryoablation vs open: p=0.861 Cryoablation vs robot: p=0.390
Open	\$76	\$167	\$189	
Robot	\$103	\$283	\$700	
<b>Recovery room</b>				
Cryoablation	\$291	\$454	\$337	Cryoablation vs open: p=0.331 Cryoablation vs robot: p=0.720
Open	\$410	\$393	\$139	
Robot	\$356	\$432	\$227	
<b>R&amp;B—Routine</b>				
Cryoablation	\$0	\$95	\$278	Cryoablation vs open: p<0.0001 Cryoablation vs robot: p<0.0001
Open	\$1,694	\$1,907	\$821	
Robot	\$869	\$1,106	\$674	
<b>R&amp;B—ICU</b>				
Cryoablation	\$0	\$133	\$814	Cryoablation vs open: p<0.730 Cryoablation vs robot: p<0.914
Open	\$0	\$200	\$699	
Robot	\$0	\$151	\$853	
<b>Anesthesia</b>				
Cryoablation	\$684	\$653	\$281	Cryoablation vs open: p<0.0001 Cryoablation vs robot: p<0.0001
Open	\$1,223	\$1,184	\$375	
Robot	\$1,468	\$1,678	\$967	
<b>Respiratory</b>				
Cryoablation	\$0	\$8	\$53	Cryoablation vs open: p=0.267 Cryoablation vs robot: p=0.325
Open	\$0	\$47	\$168	
Robot	\$0	\$57	\$488	
<b>Medications</b>				
Cryoablation	\$319	\$365	\$222	Cryoablation vs open: p=0.014 Cryoablation vs robot: p=0.936
Open	\$485	\$572	\$362	
Robot	\$315	\$368	\$184	
<b>Laboratory/Pathology</b>				
Cryoablation	\$80	\$205	\$299	Cryoablation vs open: p<0.0001 Cryoablation vs robot: p<0.0001
Open	\$574	\$804	\$540	
Robot	\$485	\$720	\$656	
<b>Other</b>				
Cryoablation	\$0	\$164	\$815	Cryoablation vs open: p=0.573 Cryoablation vs robot: p=0.457
Open	\$0	\$84	\$213	
Robot	\$0	\$61	\$295	
<b>Total</b>				
Cryoablation	\$6,067	\$6,803	\$4,459	Cryoablation vs open: p<0.0001 Cryoablation vs robot: p<0.0001
Open	\$11,392	\$11,803	\$3,190	
Robot	\$11,830	\$13,242	\$4,371	

### KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

### OUTCOME COMPARISON

### T1 TUMORS

### T1B TUMORS

### ABLATION META-ANALYSES

### QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

### RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

### COST OF CARE ▼

Chebab et al., 2016

Patel et al., 2021

### CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY

### END NOTES



## COST CONSIDERATIONS, REIMBURSEMENT, AND TRENDS

Patel et al., 2021

### Percutaneous ablation of renal tumors versus surgical ablation and partial nephrectomy: Medicare trends and reimbursement cost comparison from 2010 to 2018

The purpose of this study is to analyze trends in Medicare volume and reimbursement for percutaneous and surgical ablation as well as laparoscopic and open partial nephrectomy for treatment of small renal tumors from 2010 to 2018. **Minimally invasive procedures are trending up:** Since 2010, minimally invasive procedures have become more popular among Medicare patients. Both laparoscopic partial nephrectomy and percutaneous ablation have increased, while open partial nephrectomy and surgical ablation have decreased.

KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

T1 TUMORS

T1B TUMORS

ABLATION META-ANALYSES

QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

COST OF CARE ▼

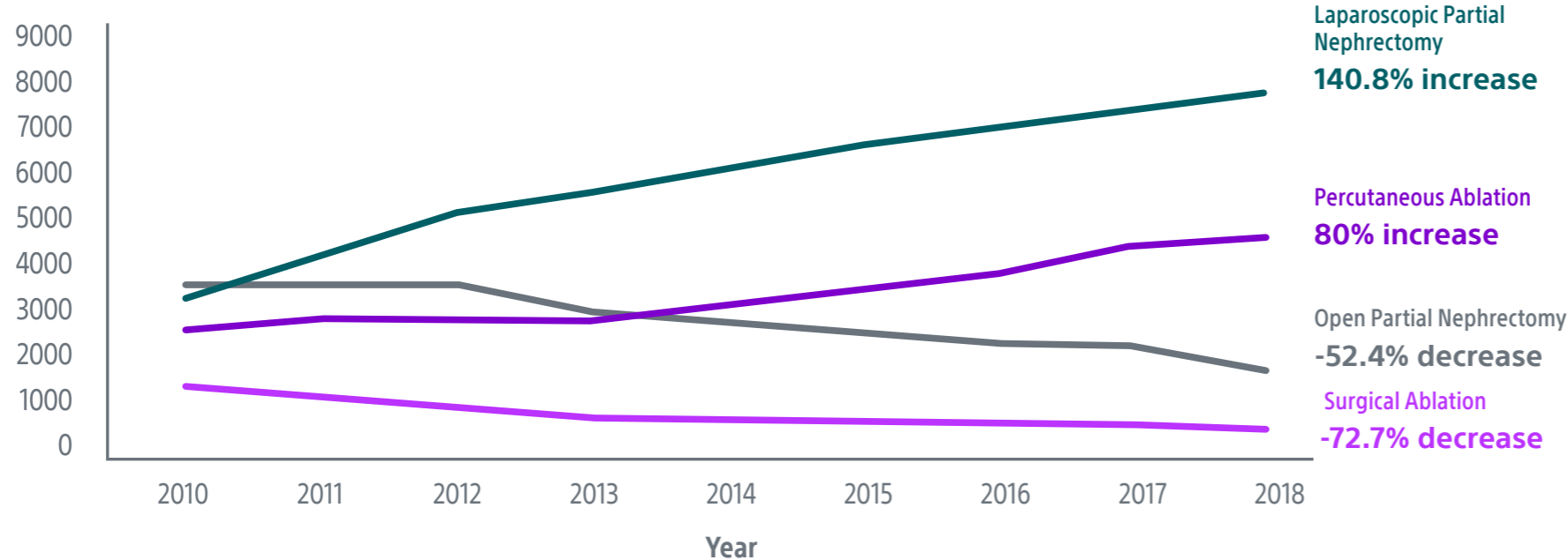
Chebab et al., 2016

Patel et al., 2021

CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY

END NOTES

Volume by Procedure Type





## COST CONSIDERATIONS, REIMBURSEMENT, AND TRENDS

Patel et al., 2021

### Percutaneous cryoablation is the most popular modality for kidney lesions:

Among ablation modalities, percutaneous cryoablation has increased most dramatically. The marked increase in volume of percutaneous ablations, likely due to its demonstrated safety when performed close to the renal collecting system and visibility of the iceball.

KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

T1 TUMORS

T1B TUMORS

ABLATION META-ANALYSES

QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

**COST OF CARE ▼**

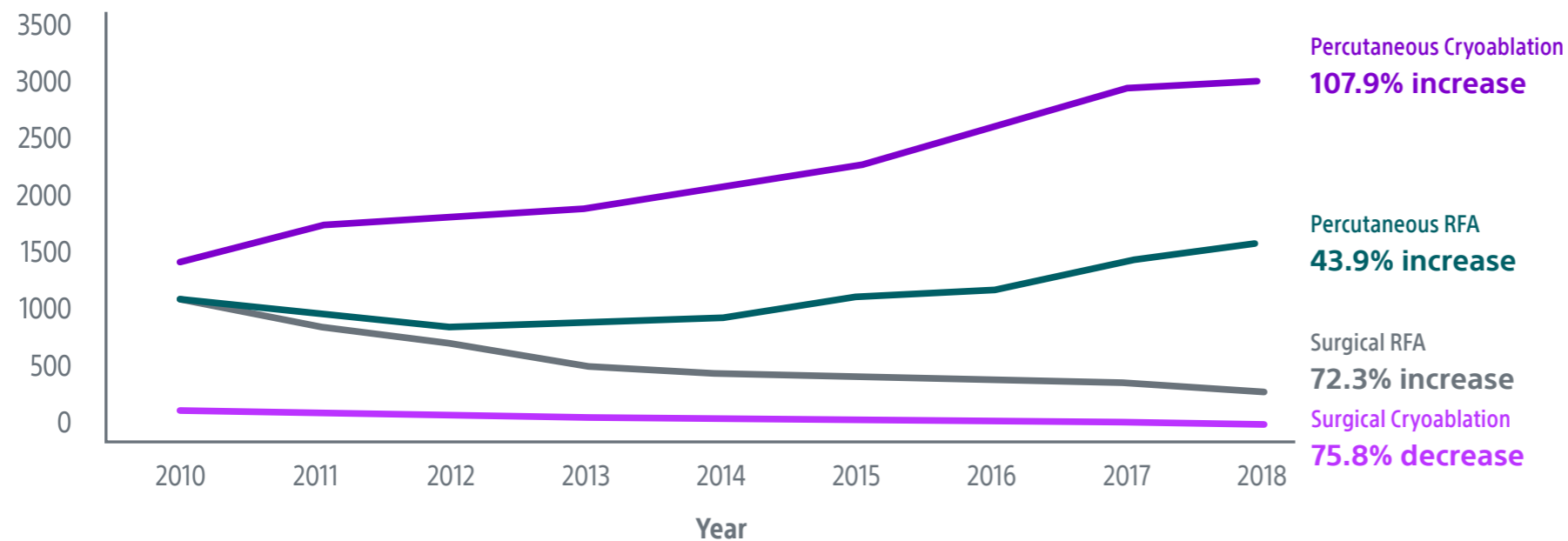
Chebab et al., 2016

Patel et al., 2021

CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY

END NOTES

Volume by Ablation Modality





## COST CONSIDERATIONS, REIMBURSEMENT, AND TRENDS

Patel et al., 2021

### Reimbursement breakdown

Comparing percutaneous radiofrequency ablation, percutaneous cryoablation, surgical radiofrequency ablation, surgical cryoablation, open partial nephrectomy, and laparoscopic partial nephrectomy. Percutaneous approaches reimburse at a lower rate, but also have lower associated costs.

Procedure	2010				2018			
	Reimbursement per procedure	Work RVU	Practice expense RVU	Malpractice RVU	Reimbursement per procedure	Work RVU	Practice expense RVU	Malpractice RVU
Percutaneous radiofrequency ablation of renal tumor(s)*	\$374.86	6.80	2.59	0.47	\$358.56	6.55	2.84	0.57
Percutaneous cryoablation of renal tumor(s)	\$482.74	9.13	3.50	0.63	\$481.32	8.88	3.71	0.78
Surgical radiofrequency ablation of renal tumor(s)*	\$1211.18	21.36	9.21	1.54	\$1216.43	21.36	10.09	2.34
Surgical cryoablation of renal tumor(s)	\$1269.62	22.22	9.72	1.60	\$1269.35	22.22	10.60	2.44
Open partial nephrectomy	\$1371.37	24.21	10.41	1.78	\$1381.67	24.21	11.44	2.73
Laparoscopic partial nephrectomy	\$1545.99	27.41	11.61	2.00	\$1552.66	27.41	12.71	3.01

**Conclusion:** There has been a trend toward minimally invasive techniques for treatment of small renal tumors among Medicare patients. Laparoscopic partial nephrectomy has become the dominant treatment. In the setting of evidence showing comparable outcomes with surgery as well as lower costs to insurers, the volume of percutaneous ablation has also markedly increased.

KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

T1 TUMORS

T1B TUMORS

ABLATION META-ANALYSES

QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

COST OF CARE ▼

Chebab et al., 2016

Patel et al., 2021

CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY

END NOTES



## CRYOABLATION AND IMMUNOTHERAPY

In addition to killing cancer cells, ablation treatment may stimulate an immune response in patients against those cancer cells ([Yakkala](#) and [Kim](#)). Because of this, there is a growing interest in combining cryoablation with immunotherapies.

### Wah et al., 2021

#### **An Exploratory Analysis of Changes in Circulating Plasma Protein Profiles Following Image-Guided Ablation of Renal Tumours Provides Evidence for Effects on Multiple Biological Processes**

Wah and colleagues conducted a pilot exploratory study evaluating circulating plasma protein profiles after image guided ablation of small renal masses to provide insights on impact to the immune system. Patients underwent cryoablation, radiofrequency ablation, or microwave ablation. Key findings:

- Cryoablation induced the most marked change in protein profiles compared to microwave and radiofrequency. This confirms previous findings by [Erinjeri](#), [Ahmad](#) and more.
- The most marked changes were 24 hours after cryoablation, with 29 proteins increasing and 18 decreasing significantly. Principally, these changes occurred in cytokines and proteins involved in regulating inflammation, danger-associated molecular patterns, cell-proliferation, hypoxic response, apoptosis, and migration.
- Increases in IL-8, IL-6, and CCL23 specifically correlated with number of cryoprobes.

KIDNEY ABLATION OVERVIEW

OUTCOME COMPARISON

T1 TUMORS

T1B TUMORS

ABLATION META-ANALYSES

QUALITY OF LIFE  
AND COMPLICATIONS

RENAL COLLECTING SYSTEM

COST OF CARE

CRYOABLATION AND  
IMMUNOTHERAPY

END NOTES

