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First in South Africa as Doctors Freeze Cancer Cells in Breakthrough Procedure

BY SAVANNA DOUGLAS [@GOODTHINGSGUY](#) MARCH 27, 2026



Photo Credit: Cape Town Interventional Radiology

A team of Cape Town specialists has just marked a groundbreaking medical first for the country – one that could change how certain cancers are treated going forward!

Cape Town, South Africa (27 March 2026) – Doctors at UCT Private Academic Hospital have just performed an **incredible medical milestone!**

Dr Gercois Human, Dr Jateel Kassim, Dr Gareth Bydowell and the Cape Town Interventional Radiology team successfully used cryoablation to treat cancer that had returned after surgery.



Photo Credit: Cape Town Interventional Radiology

It's the first time this technique has been used locally for this type of cancer spread.

Cryoablation, in simple terms, uses extremely cold temperatures to freeze and destroy cancer cells. Guided by advanced imaging, doctors can target tumours with precision, without the need for major surgery.

In this case, the patient had previously undergone treatment for papillary thyroid carcinoma, a common form of thyroid cancer. While the original tumour had been removed, the cancer later returned in the form of secondary tumours elsewhere in the body, a process known as metastasis.

Using cryoablation, the medical team were able to directly treat these tumours by freezing them, offering a less invasive option with the potential for faster recovery and fewer complications.



Photo Credit: Cape Town Interventional Radiology

It's a significant moment not just for the team involved but for cancer care in South Africa as a whole!

Treatments like this are changing what's possible, especially for patients facing recurrence, where options can often feel limited.

While this is just one case, it opens the door to broader use of cryoablation in treating the spread of certain forms of cancer locally, giving patients access to **groundbreaking care** without needing to look abroad.

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