What is Cryoablation?

Cryoablation is a treatment that kills cancer cells with extreme cold. It does this while limiting the damage to the healthy tissue around the area.

How is it done?
A CAT scan machine is used as a guide to the location of your tumor. Needles are inserted through your skin into or around the area. The needle is hooked to a machine which causes an ice ball to form around the needle tip. It is then allowed to thaw. This process is repeated during the same session. The doctor will remove the needles at the end of your procedure.

How does ice destroy cancer cells?
The combination of freezing and thawing damages cancer cells beyond repair. Freezing causes damage to the cell wall and destroys the proteins in the cells. Thawing causes fluid from outside the cell to enter through the damaged cell wall. This causes further damage to the cell. These damaged cells are harmless and will be absorbed by your body over time.

What are the advantages?
- Patients report little to no pain.
- Normal activity can usually be resumed the next day.
- Freezing is usually well tolerated by the body.
- The procedure can be repeated if needed.
- In some cases, the procedure may be done as an outpatient.

Who can have cryoablation?
Cancer patients with a limited number of tumors may benefit from this procedure.