The prostate gland plays a contributory role in a man’s reproductive function.

Men with enlarged prostates often see their doctors for lower urinary tract symptoms (LUTS). Current treatment often results in erectile dysfunction and ejaculatory dysfunction.

According to Dr Ronny Tan, Consultant Urologist, Advanced Urology Associates, oral medications given for BPE are broadly classified into alpha-blockers, 5-alpha reductase inhibitors and phosphodiesterase-5 inhibitors (specifically tadalafil). These medications, other than tadalafil, have the potential side effects of erectile dysfunction and ejaculatory dysfunction.

Surgical procedures for BPE deal with the obstructing prostate so that the man is able to pass urine with no difficulty.

However, many men who have undergone these procedures will not be able to ejaculate during sexual activity. Some even complain of discomfort during orgasm. Erectile dysfunction has also been described in studies. If BPE is untreated, the bladder outlet obstruction due to the enlarged prostate gland can lead to irreversible bladder damage.

When there is bladder failure, surgery would no longer be able to deliver the desired result and outcome.

Prostatic urethral lift with placement of implants like the Urolift has revolutionised the treatment of BPE without the unwanted side effects of sexual dysfunction.

Dr Ronny Tan also added that Urolift allows men to return to their daily activities quicker compared to conventional surgical treatment of BPE without compromising on their sexual function. Urolift is a day surgical procedure and most men treated with Urolift do not require placement of a urethral catheter (urethra) unlike other surgeries done for BPE.

The Urolift implant comprises a suture with a nitinol capsular tab at one end and a stainless steel urethral end piece at the other. These implants stay in the body permanently.

The capsular tab is deployed onto the capsule of the prostate with the urethral end piece left within the urine tube (urethra) inside the prostate.

Men who would potentially benefit from Urolift implants include:

- Men who want to stop long-term medications for BPE
- Men who cannot accept the sexual side effects of BPE medications or prostate surgery
- Men who want to undergo the Urolift procedure should be assessed to ascertain if they would benefit from the implants. As the prostate continues to grow after any surgical treatment option, men who have had the Urolift procedure need to be reassessed should their urinary symptoms become bothersome again so that other options can be offered.