



Information for
patients and
carers

Radiotherapy to the brain

You should have also received the following leaflets:

- Radiotherapy- a general guide for patients and carers
- Planning your radiotherapy treatment to the head and neck
- Radiotherapy treatment

What are the benefits of this treatment?

Radiotherapy has damaging effects on any remaining cancer cells. It will also cause some damage to surrounding healthy tissues resulting in some side effects. The radiotherapy is given to try to shrink the cancer and relieve the symptoms. The aim of treatment will be different for each person and your oncologist should have discussed your treatment with you.

Are there any alternatives to this treatment?

The oncologist may have advised you about other possible treatments. These may include surgery or chemotherapy or a combination of these with radiotherapy. They will be happy to discuss any concerns you still have.

What will happen if you do not have this treatment?

If you choose not to have this treatment the cancer may continue to grow. Symptoms may develop and worsen. Some cancers may advance and become incurable.

Side effects- early reactions

These depend on the area of the brain being treated but can include:

Headaches

Please tell the radiographers if you suffer from headaches and they will give you appropriate advice. It may be necessary for pain control and/or steroids to be prescribed to control headaches.

Nausea

The treatment can cause you to feel sick. You may find foods taste different and you lose your appetite. Try to eat small amounts, often. Some people find food and drink containing ginger helps with nausea. You may require a prescription for anti-sickness medication

Fatigue

As radiotherapy can damage normal tissues close to or in the treated area, your body is healing these damaged cells. This commonly causes tiredness. If you feel fit enough, gentle exercise can help. Eating nourishing food and drinking plenty of water may also help to provide your body with the nutrients your cells need to repair themselves. Do not force yourself to do things you do not have the energy to do.

Hair loss

It is likely you will lose some hair in the treatment area. Hair loss may be temporary or permanent depending on the dose and length of your treatment. If you would like to discuss obtaining a wig, please speak to your radiographer or consultant.

Sore, red skin (erythema)

Radiotherapy can make the skin in the treated area become itchy, red, and sore. You can minimise this by following the advice of the

radiographers (and our skin care leaflet). It is important to wash your hair gently with baby shampoo.

Seizures (fits)

Although radiotherapy does not cause seizures, people who already suffer with them may find fits become more frequent during their radiotherapy treatment. Please let the staff know if this is the case so they can inform your doctor.

Side effects- late reactions

Some patients may notice short-term memory loss. Other late effects will depend on the part of the brain treated. Your oncologist will be able to discuss any possible late effects with you.

Always make sure you let the radiographers know if you get any side effects. We need you to tell us exactly how you feel not only with regard to side effects, but also your general wellbeing. We are here to help.

Contact details

Should you require further advice or information please contact:

Radiotherapy Reception/Transport queries (01772) 522900

Radiotherapy Appointment queries (01772) 522931

Sources of further information

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk

www.nhs.uk

www.patient.co.uk

www.accessable.co.uk

www.macmillan.org.uk

All our patient information leaflets are available on our website for patients to access and download:

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets

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If you want to stop smoking you can also contact the Quit Squad Freephone 0800 328 6297.

Please ask if you would like help in understanding this information. This information can be made available in large print and in other languages.

Gujarati:

આ માહિતીને સમજવામાં સહાયતા જોઈતી હોય તો કૃપા કરીને પૂછો. આ માહિતી મોટા છપાણ માં અને અન્ય ભાષામાં ઉપલબ્ધ કરી શકાય છે.

Romanian:

Vă rugăm să întrebați dacă aveți nevoie de ajutor pentru înțelegerea acestor informații. Aceste informații pot fi puse la dispoziție în format mare și în alte limbi.”

Polish:

Poinformuj nas, jeśli potrzebna jest ci pomoc w zrozumieniu tych informacji. Informacje te można również udostępnić dużym drukiem oraz w innych językach

Punjabi:

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਸਮਝਣ ਵੱਲ ਮਦਦ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੋਗੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਰਿਖਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਪੁੱਛੋ। ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਵੱਡੇ ਪ੍ਰਿੰਟ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵੱਲ ਮੁਹੱਈਆ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

Urdu:

دو سر ی زبانوں او ر بڑی اگر آپ کو ہی معلومات سمجھنے کے لیے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو ییچھپیا جس ییہ ابی دست ہو یسکت ہے برا ئے مہر یان پو ے یچھہی۔ معلومات

Arabic:

مطبوعة بأحرف كبيرة و بلغات إذا كنت تريد مساعدة في فهم هذه المعلومات يُرجى أن تطلب أخرى يمكن تو فسير هذه المعلومات

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Division: Surgery
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