



CyberKnife® treatment for lung cancer

Information for patients at Mount Vernon Cancer Centre

This leaflet **must be read with** the main CyberKnife® booklet PI72

What will happen during planning?

Before you begin your CyberKnife treatment you will be asked to visit the radiotherapy department to have your treatment planned.

During the planning appointment, you will have a special support cushion made to fit you. This will help you stay in the correct position during treatment and make you more comfortable.

You will be asked to lie in the same position as for your treatment. This position should be comfortable so you can keep still for between one to two hours. For this reason it is important for you to say if your treatment position is not totally comfortable.

You will then have a CT scan which will be used for planning your treatment. After this scan we will ask you to remain in the department for a couple of hours while our planning team assess the area to be treated. You will then be taken into the CyberKnife treatment room for some additional x-rays, to see if the area to be treated can be seen by the tracking system.

If the area can be seen clearly you will be contacted with your start date and times of your treatment.

If the area cannot be seen clearly then you will be referred to another hospital to have some special small markers (fiducial markers) inserted into or near the treatment area. You will be contacted with a date for this procedure.

Fiducial markers

Fiducial markers are tiny permanent metal markers which are placed into or near the treatment area. These markers are tiny gold pellets or rods about 5mm long. The position of the treatment area can vary with breathing and movement, and these markers allow the treatment to be given to the right place.

The markers can be placed in two ways.

One way is to give a local anaesthetic and use a needle, with x-ray or CT guidance.

The other way is to place the markers using bronchoscopy, with the markers placed directly through the airways. This can be a little uncomfortable so you could be given a mild sedative. After the markers are in place, you will have a chest x-ray to check their position.

There is a small chance of some side-effects after this procedure. These include infection and bleeding. A rare side-effect is a collapsed lung (pneumothorax). The oncologist will discuss these and any other possible side-effects with you in more detail.

Please inform your consultant if you are taking any **steroids or anti-coagulants** (blood thinners e.g. Warfarin or Clopidogrel, or blood thinning injections e.g. Fragmin). Please stop taking any non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as aspirin or ibuprofen 48 hours prior to the fiducial marker insertion.

After you have had the markers put in place, you will be given an appointment to visit the radiotherapy department for another planning CT scan. This is normally about one to two weeks after the markers have been inserted.

You will receive a phone call with your treatment appointment dates and times.

What are the possible side-effects from having CyberKnife treatment for lung cancer?

- Pneumonitis
Radiation may irritate the lungs, causing a cough and shortness of breath. This may require additional treatment with steroids or antibiotics. You should contact your oncology team if you notice these symptoms.
- Discomfort or pain near the area of treatment
- Occasional swallowing problems
- Fatigue

Please read about the general side-effects from having CyberKnife treatment on page 10 of the CyberKnife® booklet (PI72).

Other help and support

People who have cancer often say that during their illness they experience a range of emotions. Many find it to be a stressful, anxious and confusing time.

If you would like further information about any aspect of cancer and its treatments, including the supportive services offered at the LJMC, please drop in to the centre or call the Helpline.

The staff at the LJMC work as part of the overall team caring for you and include healthcare professionals and trained volunteers. The centre provides a relaxed setting in which to talk and ask questions.

The LJMC is situated between the main Cancer Centre building and Gate 3 (White Hill).

 **Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre**
... supporting people affected by cancer...

Services offered at the LJMC include:

- ① Drop-in centre
- ① Telephone helpline
- ① Benefits advice*
- ① Complementary therapies*
- ① Relaxation classes
- ① Counselling*
- ① Look Good...Feel Better™ beauty workshops
- ① The Way Ahead headwear workshops
- ① Self-help courses

* These services are only available to NHS patients under the care of an oncologist based at Mount Vernon Cancer Centre

Mon-Fri: **9.30am–4.30pm**

Telephone Helpline: **020 3826 2555**

Website: **www.ljmc.org**