

Post-Stereotactic Gamma Knife Radiosurgery

Discharge Instructions

Care of Pin Sites

- Remove bandages the following day and leave the pin sites open to air. Clean the pin sites twice a day with mild soap and water. Apply antibiotic ointment twice a day until the sites are healed, which can take up to 5 days.
- Keep your head elevated on a couple of pillows for 1 week, which will help to lessen swelling at the pin sites and minimize pressure within your head. You may apply cold compresses 3 times a day for no more than 20 minutes at a time if swelling occurs. Swelling generally resolves within 5 days.
- A small amount of pink drainage on your pillow is not unusual for the first couple of days. The pin sites may be tender to the touch for 3 to 4 days; you can take non-aspirin pain medications, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen, if you are having discomfort.
- You may wash your hair/scalp 24 hours after your radiosurgery treatment. Avoid wearing tight bands, wigs, hats, bandanas, or stocking caps for 5 days while pin sites are healing.
- Notify your doctor if any of the following occur:
 - Increased pain at the pin sites
 - Redness or swelling
 - Bleeding
 - Pin sites are hot to the touch
 - A cloudy or foul-smelling draining from the pin sites
 - Temperature of 101 degrees or higher

Monitoring Side Effects

Notify your doctor or go to the nearest emergency room if you experience any of the following:

- A persistent severe headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Visual changes or difficulty speaking
- Worsening of neurological symptoms
- Seizure

If you go to a physician or a hospital other than UT Southwestern Medical Center for issues related to your Gamma Knife procedure, please notify the radiosurgery nurse.

You may experience fatigue that can last for a few weeks after your treatment is complete. Some things you can do to help yourself during this time include:

- Plan for periods and adhere to your rest schedule. Enlist the help of family and friends to run errands and do household chores.
- Increase your fluid intake and eat well. Eat foods that provide a high source of energy, such as complex carbohydrates like pasta, grains, and vegetables.
- Eat small, frequent meals if loss of appetite is a problem. Nutritional supplements may also help.
- Plan brief periods of daily exercise, such as walking or bicycling.
- If your doctor normally permits you to drive, you may drive after 48 hours following radiosurgery.

Follow-Up Schedule

You will receive a call with a follow-up appointment in a couple of days. Follow-up appointments will be scheduled with your doctor anywhere from 2 to 6 months. Your physician might also request an MRI scan after your treatment to evaluate response.

If you have any questions or problems, call your radiosurgery nurse Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 214-633-3000. Afterhours or weekends, call 214-645-8525. If you need immediate attention, go to your nearest emergency center.