



A GUIDE FOR Proton Therapy Patients with Head & Neck Cancer

Radiation for Head and Neck Cancer

More than 60,000 Americans are diagnosed annually with head and neck cancer.

For most patients with head and neck cancer, radiation therapy is a treatment option. Proton therapy can decrease risk of damage to surrounding organs caused by unnecessary radiation.

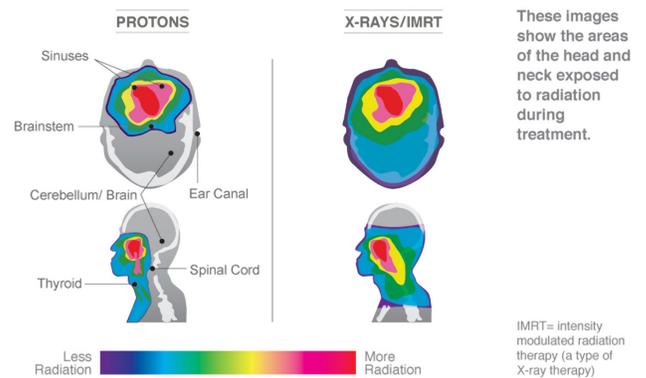
Proton therapy is precise, and therefore better able to avoid surrounding organs. The radiation dose deposited by protons increases gradually until it peaks suddenly, at the tumor site, and then falls to zero.

Proton Therapy is Highly Targeted

Protons can be controlled with greater precision than X-rays. This means that more energy goes into destroying the tumor and less radiation is delivered to surrounding healthy tissue. For this reason, proton therapy is particularly good for treating tumors near healthy organs, including the head and neck.

When treating head and neck tumors, it's critical to protect organs surrounding the tumor. Proton therapy can potentially reduce damage to eyes, optic nerves, salivary glands, and other organs, thereby reducing the likelihood of side effects such as blindness, hearing deterioration, and dry mouth. Secondary malignancies in future are also less likely with proton therapy.

Cancer of the Nasopharynx: Proton therapy delivers significantly less radiation to the spinal cord than X-rays, reducing the likelihood of side effects^{8,13}



Adapted from: Taheri-Kadkhoda Z, et al. *Radiat Oncol*. 2008; 3:4.

Seattle Cancer Care Alliance
 Fred Hutch · Seattle Children's · UW Medicine
 Proton Therapy Center



Proton Therapy is the Solution for Many Patients with Head and Neck Cancer

How do I know if proton therapy will work for me?

Many patients with head & neck cancer are good candidates for proton therapy. To better understand the use of proton therapy in your treatment, we will schedule you a consultation with a radiation oncologist. During the consultation, the oncologist will discuss different treatment options with you and determine if you will benefit from proton therapy.

How many proton treatments will I receive?

If proton therapy is selected as the best treatment option, treatments are generally given 5 days a week for 6-7 weeks, depending on the stage of your cancer and other factors.

Can proton therapy be used along with other kinds of cancer treatment?

Yes. Proton therapy can be used in conjunction with surgery and / or chemo therapy.

Is proton therapy covered by my insurance?

Proton therapy is covered by many insurance providers, including Medicare. SCCA Proton Therapy Center has financial counselors who can guide you through the insurance process. Please contact us at 888-984-7782 if you have questions about coverage.

What can I expect with proton therapy at SCCA Proton Therapy?

- Proton therapy is given in a state-of-the-art center with specialized medical equipment.
- Treatment and care are given by a team of specialized doctors, nurses and healthcare professionals.
- Side effects, if they occur, can be treated with medication prescribed by your radiation oncologist.
- The time spent delivering proton therapy to the tumor is only few minutes, but the entire treatment session may take 20-30 minutes.

Head and Neck Specialists

George E. Laramore, Ph.D., M.D., FACR, FASTRO

“High tech medicine can be adapted to the individual patient’s needs. I enjoy using the latest technological innovations in radiation oncology to design and carry out the optimal treatment for each patient.”

Dr. Laramore is the past Medical Director of SCCA Proton Therapy Center, and the past Chair of the Department of Radiation Oncology at the University of Washington. Dr. Laramore is board certified in therapeutic radiology and radiation oncology with expertise in proton therapy, and is the Peter Wootton Professor of Radiation Oncology at the University of Washington.

Jay J. Liao, M.D.

“I enjoy establishing strong relationships with my patients, providing individualized and compassionate care, and educating patients about their disease process and treatment.”

Dr. Liao is a board-certified radiation oncologist with expertise in proton therapy. He is an Associate Professor of Radiation Oncology at the University of Washington.

Upendra Parvathaneni, M.D., FRANZCR

“My philosophy is to treat my patients as I would like to be treated.”

Dr. Parvathaneni is board certified in radiation oncology in Australia and the United States. He is the Head of the Head-and-Neck Radiation Oncology Program and an Associate Professor of Radiation Oncology at the University of Washington.

Contact Us

To learn more about proton therapy or to request a consultation, please call the SCCA Proton Therapy Center at 877-897-7628 or email info@seattleprotons.org.

Seattle Cancer Care Alliance
Fred Hutch · Seattle Children’s · UW Medicine

Proton Therapy Center

