Proton Therapy is the Solution for Many Patients with Lung Cancer

How do I know if proton therapy will work for me?
Many patients with lung cancer are good candidates for proton therapy. If you would like to better understand the use of proton therapy in your treatment, we can work with you to schedule a consultation with a radiation oncologist. During the consultation, the radiation oncologist will discuss different treatment options with you and determine if you will benefit from proton therapy. The radiation oncologists who practice at SCCA Proton Therapy Center and UW Medicine also use other forms of radiation to treat lung cancers, so they will provide you with an expert recommendation for your consideration.

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 are dedicated to guiding you through the insurance process. Please contact us at 888-984-7782 if you have questions about coverage.

References:
Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States, and affects many more patients worldwide. Chemotherapy alone is not enough to kill 100% of cancer cells, and surgery often cannot remove all of the cancer that is present. Radiation is a critical component of lung cancer treatment, either given alone, or in conjunction with chemotherapy or surgery.

Proton therapy is one of the most advanced forms of radiation treatment.

Proton Therapy Offers:

- Less radiation to your heart, lung, and esophagus
- Potentially fewer side effects from radiation treatment, including lower rates of pneumonitis and esophagitis (less inflammation of the lungs and esophagus) compared to regular radiation
- Similar efficacy at killing cancer cells as other forms of radiation

Too much radiation to the healthy tissue surrounding the tumor can increase the risk of side effects. This is a major concern when it comes to radiation treatment for lung cancer because the cancer may be close to your heart, healthy lung, and other critical organs. The unique properties of protons allow proton radiation to better conform to your cancer, reducing excess radiation to the healthy tissues and organs around it.

A large clinical trial in lung cancer treatment recently showed that a patient's survival after lung cancer treatment is closely related to the amount of radiation the patient's heart received, and the amount of esophagus toxicity (swallowing difficulty) patients developed during radiation treatment (trial RTOG 0617). Proton therapy can drastically decrease the radiation dose to the heart and the esophagus, as well as normal lung.

In the figure below, a proton therapy radiation plan is shown on the right, and a plan with regular radiation is shown on the left. With proton radiation, there is less radiation to the normal lung, heart, and rest of the body, compared with regular radiation.

“We evaluated the options and because proton therapy is targeted and the radiation would not go through the tumor to damage other tissue, we decided that was the best way to go. I was impressed by what it offered regarding targeting the tumor with less collateral damage. It was a no-brainer.”

- Margery Godfrey, Lung Cancer Survivor

At our center, we believe in advancing lung cancer treatment for all patients, which is why we are participating in a large, multi-center clinical trial comparing proton radiation against regular x-ray radiation for lung cancer treatment, RTOG 1308. Through clinical research, we help not only our patients, but all future patients with lung cancer.

Proton therapy is as effective as regular x-ray radiation in treating lung cancer and can reduce side effects such as inflammation of the heart, lungs, and esophagus. This is great news for you and your loved ones because now you have a powerful tool to fight lung cancer that can reduce your risk of side effects.

Are You a Candidate for Proton Therapy?

You should consider proton therapy if you meet any of the criteria below:

- Have lung cancer that has not spread outside your chest
- Have limited or poor pulmonary function
- Have a heart condition
- Had prior radiation therapy

Choosing the right treatment for your lung cancer is an important decision. While there are a lot of good options, make sure you look into proton therapy at SCCA Proton Therapy Center to help reduce your risk of side effects.

Find out more.

To learn more about treatment options for lung cancer, see www.SCCAprotontherapy.com or call 877-897-7628.