

Stereotactic Radiosurgery (SRS)

SRS is a type of radiation therapy that uses high doses of radiation to kill cancer cells and shrink tumors in the brain. Radiation may be used to cure cancer, prevent it from coming back or stop or slow its growth. It is also used as a palliative measure, to lessen symptoms such as pain or pressure. It's most common to get 1 SRS radiation treatment. In some cases, people may get up to 5 treatments. Your treatment **does not** make you radioactive or harmful to others.

What to expect

You do not need to do anything to prepare for your treatment. However, if you think it will be painful to lay flat on the treatment table for 30 to 60 minutes, you may want to take pain medicine before you arrive. If you get anxious in small spaces, ask your radiation doctor what medicine you can take to help you relax. If you take any medicine to relax you, you will need someone to drive you to and from your treatment visits.

Treatment planning

Treatment planning is done during a 2-to-3-hour visit called CT simulation, or CT sim. During this visit you have a brain MRI in the Bolwell building, followed by a brain CT scan in the Seidman Radiation department. You **do not** receive radiation on this day.

An IV (intravenous line) is placed in your hand or arm for your MRI. The IV is used to give you contrast dye, which helps certain areas show up more clearly on your MRI pictures. After the MRI, you lie in a CT scan machine in the position you will be in for your radiation treatment. This includes wearing the mask that was made for you. The pictures taken during your scans are used to make your radiation plan. Before you leave, your nurse tells you when you need to return for treatment.

Planning and waiting

Your radiation doctor, physicists and dosimetrists use the MRI and CT sim pictures to plan your radiation. The plan is sent to your insurance for approval. The whole process takes less than 1 week.

Radiation treatment

Before your treatment, an image of your treatment area is taken and compared to your planning scan. This shows your team if you are in the right position or if changes are needed before starting treatment.

You will need to lie flat and stay still on the radiation table. Most SRS treatments last 30 minutes to 1 hour. Once the treatment starts, you can't talk but you can raise your hand if you need something. You can also listen to music in the treatment room.

Follow-up care

Plan to have a brain MRI and follow-up visit with your radiation doctor 2 to 3 months after your treatment. The MRI shows your doctor how the treated area in your brain has responded to radiation.

When to call your radiation doctor

- Temperature of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher and/or chills
- Nausea or throwing up
- Bad headache that is worse than what you are used to
- Confusion or feeling very sleepy, tired or restless for no reason
- If you fall or have new numbness or tingling anywhere
- Non-urgent concerns, questions or steroid refill requests



When to call 911 – also call your radiation doctor after calling 911

- Seizures
- Signs of a stroke which include: vision changes, slurred speech, arm weakness when trying to lift both arms or facial weakness/droop when trying to smile, problems walking or keeping balance
- Any problems you think are an emergency

This info is a general resource. It is not meant to replace your doctor's advice. Ask your doctor or health care team any questions. Always follow their instructions.