Royal Devon
University Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

Treatment schedule for primary brain tumours (WHO Grade 4)

Radiotherapy and Chemotherapy (Temozolomide)

Other formats

If you need this leaflet in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service:

- 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services)
- 01271 314090 (for North Devon services)
- rduh.pals@nhs.net

Did you know...?

The FORCE Cancer Support Centre is based in the grounds of the RD&E Hospital (Wonford)

(Find us in the hospital site map.)

We provide:

Information; Support and advice;
Complementary therapies;
Welfare Benefits Advice; Wig Fitting;
Relaxation classes; Refreshments

Our services are FREE to anyone affected by cancer

Why not drop in or call us on
01392 406151

www.forcecancercharity.co.uk

Cancer charity force

Registered Charity No. 296884

working locally to support anyone affected by cancer

Name:

Patient number:

Specialist nurse: Samantha (Sam) Sargeant

Contact: 07917 491271 (answer phone: Monday to Friday 8:30am – 3pm)

Email: rduh.neurooncologynurse@nhs.net

Consultant oncologist:

Secretary:

Radiotherapy reception: 01392 402117

Who to contact if you have treatment complications

Eastern services

Acute Oncology: **07825 401059** (Urgent)

Or non-urgent: **01392 402876** (Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm)

Northern services

Acute Oncology: **01271 334478** (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm)

or out of hours: **01271 322577** (speak to operator and say you are a cancer patient on treatment)

Treatment start date:

Duration:

Treatment completion date:

Following your clinic appointment today with your consultant oncologist it has been suggested that you should undergo a course of treatment with combined radiotherapy and chemotherapy.

The treatment is delivered in two stages:

Stage one

- Three- or six-week course of radiotherapy every day Monday to Friday (usually no weekends unless catch up fractions are required)

On the same day as you start radiotherapy you will start a

- Three- or six-week course of chemotherapy tablets taken every day including weekends

The chemotherapy medication is called **Temozolomide** and your specialist nurse or clinic nurse will give you a separate information sheet about this medication.

While on this treatment schedule you will be started on a course of antibiotic medication called **Co-trimoxazole** (Septrin). This antibiotic medication will be given to you alongside your chemotherapy medication. This antibiotic is taken on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday during stage one of your treatment plan.

A weekly blood test will be arranged at the hospital and the radiographer will tell you when and where to go.

Please be aware that your consultant may adjust the treatment plan according to your specific situation.

Before stage one of your treatment can start we will need to arrange some appointments that will help with the planning and preparation of your treatment. These will include the following:

Pre-treatment planning schedule

- Height and weight
- Pre-chemotherapy bloods at your GP surgery / hospital
- CT planning scan - radiotherapy planning session [**30-45 minutes**]
- Mask fitting appointment (often arranged at the same time as the CT Planning Scan) [**30-45 minutes**]
- Pre-chemotherapy assessment appointment [**one hour**], to include:
    - safety issues
    - contact numbers
    - collection of medications
      (chemotherapy tablets, antibiotics and anti-sickness)

All of these appointment details outlining dates, times and locations will be given to you over the phone and/or sent to you in the post by our Radiotherapy team.

Once you have attended the above appointments you will be given a date to start your three- or six-week course of treatment as outlined in stage one.

<u>This is usually three to four weeks after your initial clinic appointment.</u>

Your consultant team will aim to see you in clinic periodically during your stage one treatment. During these visits we will check in to see how you are feeling and managing the treatment and make any changes/adjustments to the plan that may be required.

You have daily contact with the radiographer team and so please do discuss any ongoing concerns regarding treatment with them and they can advise/escalate concerns to your consultant team.

What happens after stage one?

At the end of stage one of treatment the oncologist or a member of their team, in conjunction with you, will then decide about starting stage two of the treatment plan.

If you are to go ahead with stage two of the treatment plan, we will aim to commence this approx. four to six weeks after completion of your concurrent radiotherapy/chemotherapy.

You will have a post-treatment MRI Scan approximately three months after you have completed stage one of your treatment (radiotherapy/chemotherapy).

Stage two

Following completion of your three- or six-week course of radiotherapy and chemotherapy you will commence a further course of chemotherapy if your consultant has decided this is the right treatment pathway and it is safe to do so.

This will be the same chemotherapy drug (Temozolomide) as you had in stage one. However, the schedule is different and the dose will be increased on cycle one and cycle two if tolerated.

Each 'cycle' lasts 28 days (four weeks)

- five days of Temozolomide (day one to five of cycle)
- 23 days of no Temozolomide
- No antibiotics required in stage two
- Monthly blood test required for treatment authorisation

Prior to each four-week cycle of chemotherapy you will be contacted by your consultant oncologist or a member of the medical or nursing team for a review; you will need to have a blood test two to three days prior to this review.

If you feel well and your blood results are within the normal ranges for chemotherapy, then you will the continue the Temozolomide for up to six cycles.

General notes

During stage one and two of your treatment take any regular medications you are on as per your usual routine.

We use dexamethasone with some chemotherapy to help with sickness and it is often used during your stage one treatment to alleviate any swelling causing by the radiotherapy and to aid recovery. If you are unsure about your steroid medication please speak with your specialist nurse who will be able to advise you.

Do not abruptly stop steroids without first speaking to your treatment team, unless advised to do so by a medical professional.

Anti-sickness medications

It is recommended that whilst you are taking your chemotherapy medication you take the prescribed anti-sickness medications. Anti-sickness medications will be prescribed and issued with your chemotherapy tablets. If you have problems with sickness or constipation, please contact the chemotherapy unit, who will be able to advise/review your medications.

Flu vaccination

A flu vaccination is encouraged whilst you are undergoing oncology treatments but please discuss with your consultant, specialist nurse or chemotherapy nurse regarding the best time to have the vaccination.

COVID-19 vaccination

Please discuss requirement for COVID-19 vaccination with your oncology team.

Medication

Please read all medication labels carefully, if you are unsure about your chemotherapy medications please contact the Chemotherapy Unit on 01392 402887.

Please ensure any remaining (left-over) chemotherapy medication is safely stored and returned to the Oncology department or Cherrybrook as soon as possible. This is important for correct disposal and to ensure you receive the correct doses of chemotherapy treatment.

As a team we are here to support you, if you have any questions or concerns before, during or after your treatment then please don't hesitate to speak with your:

- Specialist nurse
- Chemotherapy nurse
- Radiographer

Pre-treatment checks

Planning pre-treatment

- Height and weight
- Pre-chemotherapy bloods
- Mask
- CT planning scan
- Radiotherapy planning session
- Pre-chemotherapy assessment (Cherrybrook, Level 1, Area S)

Stage one

- Three- or six-weeks Radiotherapy Monday-Friday
- Three- or six-weeks Chemotherapy Monday-Sunday (everyday)
- Three- or six-weeks antibiotics (Monday/Wednesday/Friday)

Stage two

- Up to six cycles of Chemotherapy (four weekly)

Each cycle

- Five days Chemotherapy tablets
- 23 days of no Chemotherapy tablets
- Monthly blood check prior to Chemotherapy cycle

Additional tests

MRI brain scans approximately three-monthly

Stage one

Three- or six-weeks radiotherapy and chemotherapy (Temozolomide)

	Light meal at least two hours before Temozolomide	Anti-emetic one hour before Temozolomide	Temozolomide one hour before radiotherapy (take on an empty stomach)	Radiotherapy	Antibiotic (only taken for the three- or six-week course of radiotherapy / chemotherapy)
	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME
MONDAY					
TUESDAY					**x**
WEDNESDAY					
THURSDAY					**x**
FRIDAY					
SATURDAY				**x**	**x**
SUNDAY				**x**	**x**

Blood test during radiotherapy and chemotherapy will be undertaken

Day –

Stage one

Three- or six-weeks radiotherapy and chemotherapy (Temozolomide)

	Light meal at least two hours before Temozolomide	Anti-emetic one hour before Temozolomide	Temozolomide one hour before radiotherapy (take on an empty stomach)	Radiotherapy	Antibiotic (only taken for the three- or six-week course of radiotherapy / chemotherapy)
	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME
MONDAY					
TUESDAY					**x**
WEDNESDAY					
THURSDAY					**x**
FRIDAY					
SATURDAY				**x**	**x**
SUNDAY				**x**	**x**

Blood test during radiotherapy and chemotherapy will be undertaken

Day –

Stage one

Three- or six-weeks radiotherapy and chemotherapy (Temozolomide)

	Light meal at least two hours before Temozolomide	Anti-emetic one hour before Temozolomide	Temozolomide one hour before radiotherapy (take on an empty stomach)	Radiotherapy	Antibiotic (only taken for the three- or six-week course of radiotherapy / chemotherapy)
	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME
MONDAY					
TUESDAY					**x**
WEDNESDAY					
THURSDAY					**x**
FRIDAY					
SATURDAY				**x**	**x**
SUNDAY				**x**	**x**

Blood test during radiotherapy and chemotherapy will be undertaken

Day –

Stage one

Three- or six-weeks radiotherapy and chemotherapy (Temozolomide)

	Light meal at least two hours before Temozolomide	Anti-emetic one hour before Temozolomide	Temozolomide one hour before radiotherapy (take on an empty stomach)	Radiotherapy	Antibiotic (only taken for the three- or six-week course of radiotherapy / chemotherapy)
	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME
MONDAY					
TUESDAY					**x**
WEDNESDAY					
THURSDAY					**x**
FRIDAY					
SATURDAY				**x**	**x**
SUNDAY				**x**	**x**

Blood test during radiotherapy and chemotherapy will be undertaken

Day –

Stage one

Three- or six-weeks radiotherapy and chemotherapy (Temozolomide)

	Light meal at least two hours before Temozolomide	Anti-emetic one hour before Temozolomide	Temozolomide one hour before radiotherapy (take on an empty stomach)	Radiotherapy	Antibiotic (only taken for the three- or six-week course of radiotherapy / chemotherapy)
	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME
MONDAY					
TUESDAY					**x**
WEDNESDAY					
THURSDAY					**x**
FRIDAY					
SATURDAY				**x**	**x**
SUNDAY				**x**	**x**

Blood test during radiotherapy and chemotherapy will be undertaken

Day –

Stage one

Three- or six-weeks radiotherapy and chemotherapy (Temozolomide)

	Light meal at least two hours before Temozolomide	Anti-emetic one hour before Temozolomide	Temozolomide one hour before radiotherapy (take on an empty stomach)	Radiotherapy	Antibiotic (only taken for the three- or six-week course of radiotherapy / chemotherapy)
	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME
MONDAY					
TUESDAY					**x**
WEDNESDAY					
THURSDAY					**x**
FRIDAY					
SATURDAY				**x**	**x**
SUNDAY				**x**	**x**

Blood test during radiotherapy and chemotherapy will be undertaken

Day –

Stage two

Cycle one

Blood test due: _____

	Light meal at least two hours before Temozolomide	Anti-emetic 1 hour before Temozolomide	Temozolomide
	TIME	TIME	TIME
MONDAY			
TUESDAY			
WEDNESDAY			
THURSDAY			
FRIDAY			
SATURDAY			
SUNDAY			

Stage two

Cycle two

Blood test due: _____

	Light meal at least two hours before Temozolomide	Anti-emetic one hour before Temozolomide	Temozolomide
	TIME	TIME	TIME
MONDAY			
TUESDAY			
WEDNESDAY			
THURSDAY			
FRIDAY			
SATURDAY			
SUNDAY			

Stage two

Cycle three

Blood test due: _____

	Light meal at least two hours before Temozolomide	Anti-emetic one hour before Temozolomide	Temozolomide
	TIME	TIME	TIME
MONDAY			
TUESDAY			
WEDNESDAY			
THURSDAY			
FRIDAY			
SATURDAY			
SUNDAY			

Stage two

Cycle four

Blood test due: _____

	Light meal at least two hours before Temozolomide	Anti-emetic one hour before Temozolomide	Temozolomide
	TIME	TIME	TIME
MONDAY			
TUESDAY			
WEDNESDAY			
THURSDAY			
FRIDAY			
SATURDAY			
SUNDAY			

Stage two

Cycle five

Blood test due: _____

	Light meal at least two hours before Temozolomide	Anti-emetic one hour before Temozolomide	Temozolomide
	TIME	TIME	TIME
MONDAY			
TUESDAY			
WEDNESDAY			
THURSDAY			
FRIDAY			
SATURDAY			
SUNDAY			

Stage two

Cycle six

Blood test due: _____

	Light meal at least two hours before Temozolomide	Anti-emetic one hour before Temozolomide	Temozolomide
	TIME	TIME	TIME
MONDAY			
TUESDAY			
WEDNESDAY			
THURSDAY			
FRIDAY			
SATURDAY			
SUNDAY			

Please write down any questions you may like to ask:

Information and support

FORCE Cancer support centre

There are two FORCE Oncology support specialists available in the hospital and they can be contacted on 01392 402866. Alternatively, you can visit the FORCE Cancer support centre in the corner of the hospital grounds. The centre offers a whole range of services to anyone affected by cancer.

Talking to a counsellor, joining a support group and/or learning a relaxation technique can relieve anxiety and help you cope more effectively. Complementary therapies can also reduce stress and promote physical and emotional wellbeing and are available to both males and females. Look Good, Feel Better sessions are available for female patients.

You can simply drop in between 9:30am and 4:30pm or call on 01392 406151 for further information about the centre.

Brain tumour support

Brain tumour support have been providing excellent social and emotional support for 20 years.

They are uniquely dedicated to supporting anyone affected by any type of brain tumour, at any point from diagnosis and for as long as needed.

They are not just for patients themselves, but also families, carers and loved ones who are dealing day to day with the impact of a brain tumour, by providing specialist, tailored services through one-to-one and group support, as well as online and telephone support and specialist counselling.

www.braintumoursupport.co.uk

UK Support Line: 01454 422 701

support@braintumoursupport.co.uk

Macmillan cancer support

Macmillan is here to do whatever it takes to help everyone with cancer live life as fully as they can. If you or someone you care about has been diagnosed with cancer, we're here to help.

You can talk to a nurse at Macmillan **FREEPHONE: 0808 808 0000**
(Monday to Sunday 8am – 8pm)

www.macmillan.org.uk

Your notes

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern, please contact PALS:

- 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services)
- 01271 314090 (for North Devon services)
- rduh.pals@nhs.net

Have your say

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

You can also share your feedback on the Care Opinion website at www.careopinion.org.uk or freephone 0800 122 3135.

Scan the QR code to visit the Care Opinion website →

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
www.royaldevon.nhs.uk

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