

## After Your Gamma Knife Treatment

### Self-care

*This handout gives self-care instructions to follow after your gamma knife treatment.*

### When to Call

Call one of the numbers under “Who to Call” if you:

- Have a fever over 100°F (37.8°C)
- See redness or feel warmth around the places we put pins
- Have any new problems seeing, moving, swallowing, or talking



*Call for help if you have any of the symptoms listed on this page.*

### Urgent Need

Call 911 **right away** if you have a seizure, convulsion, or other emergency.

### Who to Call

It is our pleasure to care for you. Call us if you have any questions:

- Weekdays from 7 am. to 3 p.m., call the Gamma Knife Center nurses at 206.744.8087.
- After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206.598.6190 and ask for the Radiation Oncology resident to be paged.

### Self-care

- **Do not drive for the first 48 hours.** You are a little more likely to have a seizure or convulsion for the first 1 to 2 days after treatment.
- To ease swelling, put an ice pack on your forehead and on the back of your head for 15 minutes at a time. A bag of frozen peas works well for this. Swelling should go away within 3 to 4 days.
- If you have swelling around your eyes, apply warm compresses several times a day.
- You can wash your hair with shampoo the day after your treatment. Be gentle around the areas where we put the pins.
- Do not wear a hat or wig unless you first cover the rear pin areas with a clean bandage. We can provide you with the right bandage to use.

- Do not use products such as hairspray, gel, or mousse until after these areas are healed.

## Pin Care

- We will give you Band-Aids and ointment for the areas on your head where we put the pins.
- Keep the areas on your forehead covered with Band-Aids for the first 2 days. Change the Band-Aids when you apply new ointment.
- Put ointment on all 4 of these areas 3 times each day until they have scabs on them. This will take up to 10 days.
- If there is any bleeding, use something clean and press hard on that spot for 10 minutes. If the bleeding does not stop, call us or go to the nearest emergency room.

## What to Expect After Treatment

- Your head or face might be numb. The numbing medicine we used can cause this. It should go away in a few days to a few weeks.
- Problems you had before treatment might get worse for the next few days. You might also:
  - Feel tired
  - Have headaches
  - Feel a little sick to your stomach (nausea)

We will send you home with medicine to take for headache and nausea.

### Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

#### Gamma Knife Center at Harborview Medical Center

Phone: 206.744.8087  
Fax: 206.744.6008  
Center Tower, Ground Floor,  
Room 44  
325 Ninth Ave., Seattle, WA  
98104

#### Alvord Brain Tumor Center at UW Medical Center

Phone: 206.744.8087  
1959 N.E. Pacific St.,  
Seattle, WA 98195

## Diet

- You may eat and drink as usual.
- Do **not** drink alcohol while you are taking prescription pain pills.

## Activity

- Do what you feel well enough to do.
- Remember that you will feel tired.

## Follow-up

- A Gamma Knife Center nurse will call to check on how you are doing within the next 1 to 5 days.
- We will also call you when it is time to schedule your next tests and visit.
- Call us at 206.744.8087 if you have a question.