

Your Optune Device

For patients at Alvorð Brain Tumor Center

What is Optune?

Optune is a portable medical device. It is used to help treat a type of brain tumor called a *glioblastoma*.

Optune uses low-intensity electric fields to destroy brain cancer cells. Your provider may call these “tumor treating fields,” or TTFields for short.



Talk with your cancer provider if you have any questions about Optune.

How effective is it?

Studies show these patient survival rates at 5 years:

- Using Optune with chemotherapy: 13% (13 out of 100 patients)
- Using only chemotherapy: 5% (5 out of 100 patients)

How do I attach the device?

- You will apply sticky patches (*arrays*) to your scalp. It will feel like you are wearing a cap. Cables connect these arrays to the Optune device, which you will carry in a shoulder bag.
- You must shave your head every 3 days so that the arrays stick to your head.
- Most people change the arrays every 3 days when they shave. You can remove them more often, but if you change them more often than every 3 days, your skin may get irritated.
- You will get 4 portable batteries. A fully charged battery lasts 2 to 3 hours. Make sure that your batteries are charged. You also have the option of plugging in the device to an outlet. We advise you do this at night while you sleep.

How often do I need to wear it?

- Optune works best when it is turned on for at least 18 hours a day. This adds up to 126 hours in a 7-week period.
- Many patients wear Optune for 6 days straight and take a day off, then repeat.

Are there side effects?

- **Skin irritation:** You may have redness, itching, or sores on your scalp. About 10 days after you start using the device, we will check your skin, either in person or on the phone. Please tell your nurse about any skin irritation. If your symptoms are severe, we may advise you to stop wearing the arrays for a few days. We may also prescribe an ointment.
- **Headaches:** Please tell your nurse or doctor if you have headaches when using your Optune.

Can I travel with Optune?

Talk with your airline, cruise line, or train to make sure Optune meets their security rules. You may need a letter from your doctor to show to security staff. If you are traveling by plane, call the TSA Cares help line at 1.855.787.2227. Please also see the questions about travel on the Optune website: www.optune.com/resources/faqs.

How will I pay for Optune?

Call your insurance company and ask if they cover Optune. If they do not cover it, you can contact Novocure, the company that makes Optune, and ask about *patient financial assistance*.

Please be sure you either have insurance coverage or are signed up for financial aid BEFORE you get the device. Without insurance or financial aid, Optune costs about \$20,000 a month.

How do I get Optune?

After we send your prescription to Novocure, it takes about 4 weeks to get the device. A Novocure agent will come to your home and teach you about the device.

To Learn More

We highly advise visiting the Optune website to learn more: www.optune.com. To get feedback from current Optune users, visit the Facebook group called “Novocure, Optune Support for GBM.”

Questions?

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

To talk with a nurse:

Weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., call 206.598.2282 and select option #2.

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call our Community Care Line at 206.598.3300.