

# Radiation Therapy for Arteriovenous Malformation

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Arteriovenous Malformations (AVMs) are abnormal tangles of blood vessels connecting arteries and veins, disrupting normal blood flow. While they can occur throughout the body, they most commonly affect the brain and spinal cord. One of the treatment options for an AVM is radiation therapy, a highly effective and non-invasive approach. These are treated with stereotactic radiation techniques (SRS or fSRS) over 1 - 5 treatment sessions.

### Advantages of Radiation Therapy

- » Radiation therapy is a non-invasive treatment option.
- » Radiation is a quick treatment with minimal or no pain and a short recovery time.
- » Since it is non-invasive, radiation therapy is an outpatient treatment.

### Effectiveness of Radiation Therapy

Research demonstrates that radiation therapy, particularly stereotactic radiosurgery (SRS), achieves favorable outcomes in AVM management, with success rates ranging from 60% to 90% in achieving AVM obliteration. Surgery or catheter-based techniques are also important tools. Radiation is most commonly used for AVMs in locations that are higher risk for surgery.

### Side Effects

Radiation therapy is an outpatient procedure with minor acute side effects that may include localized mild scalp irritation or hair loss near the treatment site. There is a small risk of symptoms due to radiation in the years after SRS treatment for AVMs.

### Conclusion

For Arteriovenous Malformations, radiation therapy stands as an effective treatment option, offering precise targeting, minimal invasiveness, and favorable outcomes. Its advantages make it a preferred choice for some patients seeking comprehensive AVM management with minimal disruption to their lives. Ongoing follow-up care ensures optimal outcomes and addresses any potential long-term effects.

## QUICK FACTS

**90%**  
of AVMs are located in the brain.

**60-90%**  
successful rate of obliteration within 2 years after stereotactic radiation.

Stereotactic radiation is a non-invasive technique that only requires

**1-5 outpatient treatments**

for AVMs.

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