



Radiation Therapy for Trigeminal Neuralgia

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Trigeminal Neuralgia is a chronic condition with sudden, intense facial pain typically triggered by activities such as eating, speaking, or touching the face. This neurological disorder is characterized by severe facial pain originating from the trigeminal nerve. First-line treatment is with medications. Some patients will eventually fail medical management with either persistent symptoms or bothersome drug side effects. For those patients, radiation therapy is one of the main treatment options along with surgery.

Advantages of Radiation Therapy

- » Radiation therapy is a non-invasive treatment option.
- » Stereotactic radiation (SRS) for Trigeminal Neuralgia is delivered in a single outpatient treatment.
- » SRS is delivered with sub-millimeter accuracy targeting a small portion of the trigeminal nerve deep in the head.

Effectiveness of Radiation Therapy

Research has shown that radiation therapy can provide durable pain relief for some patients with Trigeminal Neuralgia.

Many patients experience significant reductions in pain intensity and frequency for months to years following treatment.

Side Effects

Radiation therapy for trigeminal neuralgia is a single outpatient procedure with little to no acute side effects. It does not require anesthesia or any incisions.

The risk of the radiation damaging other adjacent neurologic structures is 1 - 2%, which is lower than more invasive surgical techniques.

Conclusion

Radiation therapy offers a valuable treatment option for patients with medically refractory Trigeminal Neuralgia, providing effective pain relief with minimal invasiveness and a low risk of significant side effects. The treatment of Trigeminal Neuralgia requires multi-disciplinary input to help select the most appropriate treatment approach for each specific patient.

QUICK FACTS

70%
of cases occur in patients 50 years or older

Radiation therapy has a success rate of **80-90%** in providing pain relief

DID YOU KNOW?

Stereotactic radiation (SRS) was first reported in the treatment of Trigeminal Neuralgia in **1951**

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