

# Gamma Knife: FAQs

## Will the Gamma Knife procedure hurt?

If a stereotactic frame is used you will feel some discomfort from the local anaesthetic, and pressure from the pins when tightened. The actual Gamma Knife treatment is painless.

## Will I be radioactive?

No. All radiation is absorbed within the Gamma Knife or the treatment room. The cobalt rays used in the Gamma Knife treatment do not remain in the body.

## Is Gamma Knife radiosurgery safe?

The radiation dose plan will make the treatment as safe as possible and most people will experience few, if any side effects. There is a small risk of complications and these will be discussed with you in advance of treatment and are documented in our patient guide.

## Is Gamma Knife radiosurgery effective?

Results have proven to be superior or comparable to conventional neurosurgery, depending on the specific condition treated.

## Can Gamma Knife radiosurgery cause another tumour?

In the past 30 years there have been sporadic reports of radiosurgery causing new tumours elsewhere in the head, and on very rare occasions cancerous change in a treated tumour has been reported. Speak to your consultant about this if you are worried. Based on the existing experience with radiation the incidence of malignant change is very small.

## Will the radiation burn my skin?

The current radiation doses used are not sufficient to cause permanent damage to the skin. If the area being treated is close to the surface of the brain, there is a small risk of a patch of hair loss in that area. The hair will almost always grow back within a few months.

## Following treatment, when can I go back to work?

As soon as you feel well enough. There is no reason why you should not go back to work the following day.

## Following treatment, how soon can I travel?

Most patients travel home by car on the day of treatment although some feel well enough to use public transport. If you have flown in to London for treatment, you should be able to fly home again within a few days.

## Will my driving license be affected?

For some conditions there is likely to be a short ban on driving imposed by the DVLA. Your doctor will be able to advise you.

## Who can I bring with me?

We can accommodate up to two companions with you whilst you are having your treatment. Children are not permitted in the Gamma Knife unit.

## When will I see an improvement or know if the treatment has worked?

Generally the effects of Gamma Knife radiosurgery take place over many months, or even years and this is the reason for an annual review. Some lesions shrink gradually and eventually disappear while others simply experience no further tumour growth. In a few cases when patients are being treated for Trigeminal Neuralgia, some relief may occur shortly after treatment, although often it requires weeks for pain relief to occur.

020 3214 3500

[gammaknife@hcahealthcare.co.uk](mailto:gammaknife@hcahealthcare.co.uk)

The London Gamma Knife Centre  
at The Wellington Hospital

part of **HCA**Healthcare uk

## Where can I stay nearby?

A list of hotels and bed and breakfast accommodation can be provided on request. Please telephone The London Gamma Knife Centre for further information.

## Will there be refreshments provided?

Refreshments are available (free of charge) to you and your nominated family or friend. Lunch will not be available, however you may purchase food in The Platinum Medical Centre café, adjacent to our unit. Having breakfast will not impact on your treatment. For patients who are undergoing an angiogram, you should have breakfast after you have had the procedure.



## Where to find us

**For further information please contact:**

The London Gamma Knife Centre  
Platinum Medical Centre  
15-17 Lodge Road  
St John's Wood  
London  
NW8 7JA

T 020 3214 3500

[gammaknife@hcahealthcare.co.uk](mailto:gammaknife@hcahealthcare.co.uk)

### Underground

St John's Wood (Jubilee line) is a 15 minute walk

Baker Street (Bakerloo, Circle, Hammersmith, Jubilee & Metropolitan lines) is a 20 minute walk

### National Rail

Marylebone is a 20 minute walk

### Bus

Bus stop: Park Road / Lord's Cricket Ground. Bus no 13, 82, 113, 274, N13

### Parking

Car parking is limited at the centre however parking is available nearby at the Q-Park St John's Wood car park on Kingsmill Terrace

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