

Gamma Knife: Post-treatment information

Should you have any concerns, do not hesitate to contact the Gamma Knife nurse or the medical team at our centre.

In the unlikely event you require assistance after hours, you will need to contact your local Accident and Emergency Department. Take this leaflet with you so your clinician understands you have just been treated by Gamma Knife radiosurgery.

Alternatively, you can come to our Urgent Care Centre located nearby in The Wellington Hospital South Building, 8am-11pm 7 days a week.

Side effects	Why does this happen?	What should I do?
Pin sites ooze and bleed	When the frame is removed there will be four small skin wounds at the sites where the pins were holding the frame in position. The surgical pins pierce the skin and rest on the skull (they do not go into it).	The four small pin sites on your head will heal and disappear over the next few days. Don't worry if you find a little blood on your pillow the first night after treatment. If the pin sites bleed or ooze apply some pressure for two minutes and it will stop. Apply a small dressing.
Swelling at pin sites		This may involve the eyelids and may prevent them from opening fully. Do not be concerned as it will subside in a few days. Applying ice to the swollen area for 20 minutes will help minimise any potential swelling.
Infection at pin sites		It is advisable to avoid contact with soap and do not scrub the pin sites for 2-3 days, after which gentle washing will be tolerated. Look out for signs and symptoms of infection that may include local swelling, increasing pain, fever, warmth, redness and smell. Contact your general practitioner if you experience these symptoms.
Numbness and tingling on any area of the scalp	The pins used to hold the frame in position may compress the nerves that supply sensation to the back of the head.	This is not uncommon and usually resolved within a few days. It may rarely continue for a few months.
Shoulder muscle ache	From supporting the weight of the frame and having your head manipulated into the treatment position.	This should have subsided by the time you are discharged home. Usually mild pain relief and rest will control the discomfort if it persists after discharge.
Headaches	From the release of pressure when the frame is removed.	Mild pain relief and rest will control the discomfort.
Nausea and vomiting	Anxiety may increase these side effects. Radiation can also be responsible for nausea and vomiting.	This side effect can be well controlled with medication and rest, and usually resolves within a few days.
Local hair loss	When the lesion that is treated is very superficial, the radiation may reach the scalp.	In most cases the hair will grow back again within a few months.

020 3214 3500

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The London Gamma Knife Centre
at The Wellington Hospital

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Potential long-term side effects (within six months)

A small number of patients experience long-term side effects from the Gamma Knife treatment. During your outpatients' appointment and also during the consent process your consultant will have discussed with you specific side effects that you should be aware of such as seizures, vision change, weakness of the limbs and headaches.

If you have any of the above symptoms please inform your GP or local hospital.

Gamma Knife treatment can take many months before producing any noticeable effects (or side effects) that you or your physicians can evaluate.

Routine check-ups are needed to make sure you are responding to the treatment as planned. This will include doctor's visits and diagnostic imaging such as MRI scans or angiogram. These will be arranged and monitored by your consultant and general practitioner.

In the case of an emergency for the attention of the neurosurgeon on call

Please be advised that this patient has received Gamma Knife stereotactic radiosurgery at The London Gamma Knife Centre.



The London Gamma Knife Centre

Name:

Condition treated:

Date of treatment:

Consultant name:

Secretary's contact details:

Post-operative stay:

Additional information:

For further information please contact:

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