ACKERMAN
Cancer Center

NCCN Head & Neck Cancer Guidelines Updated to Include Proton Therapy

Recently, the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Guidelines for Head and Neck Cancers expanded to include proton beam therapy (PBT) as an appropriate treatment option in specific cases – particularly tumors in and around the obit of the eye and base of the skull. Proton therapy has also been shown to be beneficial in curative cases of head and neck cancers or when there is long life expectancy.

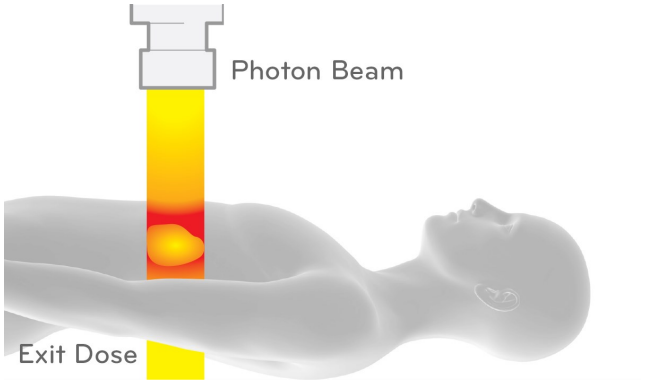
Recognizing the value of the advanced radiation therapy technology, NCCN acknowledged PBT might offer certain clinical advantages when it comes to sparing important organs such as the brain, brain stem, nerve networks, inner ear and eye as well as structures in the mouth and throat. While effectively controlling the primary tumor, proton therapy diminishes damage to normal tissue and may also reduce the risk of late tissue damage.

Since proton therapy results in significantly less radiation dose to normal tissue, the treatment offers numerous long-term benefits for head and neck cancers, including the following:

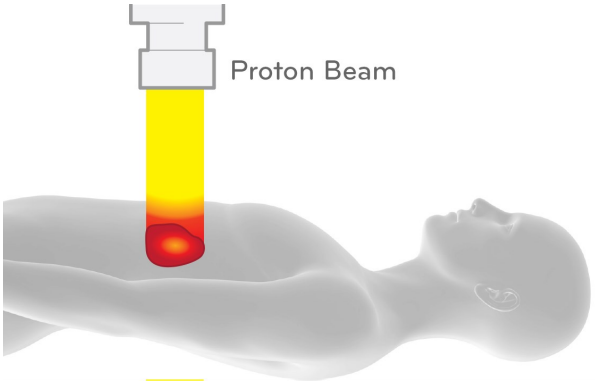
- **Reduces need for narcotics**– since PBT patients are less likely to experience mucositis, a painful inflammation of the mucous membranes lining the digestive tract, the need for opiod pain medications is lessened
- **Decreases feeding tube use by 50 percent** –proton therapy greatly reduces the need for feeding tubes during oropharyngeal tumor treatment
- **Reduces malnutrition** –caused by swallowing problems related to some cancer treatment therapies
- **Spares taste buds** – leading to better nutritional status and weight maintenance
- **Improves quality of life** – patients receiving proton therapy report better quality of life both during and after treatment due to fewer nutritional side effects
- **Reduces secondary cancer risk** – Proton therapy reduces secondary cancer risk by 26 to 39 percent.
- **Safer for re-irradiation** – the precise delivery and tissue sparing properties of proton therapy improves safety for patients requiring retreatment of recurring head and neck cancer, after previous radiation in the same location.

Proton Therapy at Ackerman Cancer Center

Proton therapy is an advanced radiation delivery system that precisely targets tumors, significantly reducing damage to healthy tissue and organs. The **Mevion S250 Proton Therapy System** at Ackerman Cancer Center offers full robotic positioning to ensure precise tumor targeting and features DirectDose™ beam modulating technology. The high level accuracy of this proton therapy delivery system, along with the experience of our expert radiation oncologists and staff, helps ensure exposure to healthy surrounding tissues and organs is minimized, significantly reducing the risk of unpleasant side effects.



Conventional Radiation Therapy



Proton Beam Therapy

To learn more about proton therapy for head and neck cancer or to schedule a consultation with one of our physicians, please call our New Patient Coordinator, Spencer, at (904) 880-5522.