

## A guide for patients following gamma knife radiosurgery for trigeminal neuralgia

### How will I feel after treatment?

It is normal for you to feel tired after gamma knife radiosurgery. You may also have some discomfort at the points where the frame was held in place. It is possible you may feel sick or have a tension headache that can last for a day or so but this is rare.

### Will I lose my hair?

No.

### Is there anything I should or shouldn't do?

It is important that you don't scratch the scabs over the pin sites as they act as a barrier to infection and should fall off of their own accord within a few days. For this reason you shouldn't wash your hair for several days after the procedure.

Don't use any types of creams or lotions on the pin sites. If your head is sore after leaving the hospital, you can take over-the-counter painkillers. Always read the patient information that comes with your medicine and if you have any questions, ask your pharmacist for advice

If you notice pain, swelling or an increase in redness at the pin sites, see your GP immediately.

### When can I go back to work?

Whether or not you have any side effects, and how you feel, will determine when you can go back to work.

Gamma knife surgery is non-invasive and has few side effects compared to open surgery. You can return to your usual routine as soon as you feel well enough. You may be well enough to go back to work the next day however most people find that they need a few days rest before they return to work.

### When will it be safe to fly?

There should be no reason why you can't fly the day after your surgery.

### Are there any side effects

Only a small minority of patients experience side effects after gamma knife surgery for trigeminal neuralgia. These can include facial numbness and, for a few people, the pain may get worse or they may have new pain.

We have not included the chance of these happening as this is specific to you and differs for every person. Your doctor will talk about the potential risks and side effects of gamma knife radiosurgery depending on your individual circumstances.

### When will I know gamma knife radiosurgery has had an effect?

You will have a follow-up appointment approximately eight weeks after gamma knife surgery.

Some people get pain relief immediately after the gamma knife radiosurgery. The majority of patients are still pain free three years after the procedure. You may continue to have pain for several months. If this is the case you should continue to take your previous pain medicines.

### When should I see my doctor?

Your doctor will advise you when he or she needs to see you for follow-up appointments. Your follow-up appointment is scheduled for:

..... at .....

### Contact

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact your doctor or the gamma knife centre Monday to Friday, between 9.00am and 5.30pm.

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- f: +44 (0)20 7460 5940
- e: [gamma.knife@cromwellhospital.com](mailto:gamma.knife@cromwellhospital.com)
- w: [bupacromwellhospital.com/services-and-specialties/gamma-knife-centre](http://bupacromwellhospital.com/services-and-specialties/gamma-knife-centre)

### Further information

The Trigeminal Neuralgia Association UK provides information and support for patients.

- w: [www.tna.org.uk](http://www.tna.org.uk)
- t: +44 (0)1883 370214
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