



My Options: Radiation Therapy

Did you know there are different ways (amounts, machines, etc.) to use radiation therapy? Different doctors and treatment centers will sometimes have different approaches. We created this list of questions so you have a better understanding of what is being suggested as part of your treatment strategy and to equip you to make the best informed decision you can!

1. What is the goal of this treatment strategy? Cure, prolong life, improve or prevent symptoms, assist in effectiveness of another therapy (e.g. surgery)?
2. If treating the brain: Is this a focused radiation treatment to the tumor alone or radiation to the whole brain?
3. If treating the body: Which organs or important structures are nearby?
4. Is the approach:
 - A **short course** of “palliative” radiation to improve symptoms
 - Often 1-10 treatments, but sometimes more
 - A **short course** of high-dose “stereotactic” radiation with the goal of long-term control of the treated area
 - Often 1-5 treatments, but sometimes more
 - Referred to as stereotactic body radiation (SBRT), stereotactic ablative radiation (SABR), or stereotactic radiosurgery (SRS)
 - A **longer course** of radiation with the goal of long-term control of the treated area
 - Typically delivered over multiple weeks with daily radiation treatments
 - Or **another** approach?
5. Why are you recommending this approach over the another?
6. What are the known short and long term effects?
7. Which side effects are common?
8. Would I have this line of treatment before, alongside or after other treatments?
9. How does this line up with my stated treatment and quality of life goals?