

LDR Brachytherapy with Vicryl Mesh Implant

What is LDR Brachytherapy?

Low Dose Rate (LDR) brachytherapy (BRAYkey-THAIR-uh-pee) is a type of radiation that is used to treat cancer. Brachytherapy delivers a concentrated dose of radiation to a tumor site while sparing much of the surrounding healthy tissue.

Brachytherapy may be used alone or with external beam radiation and/or surgery. It may cure, control, or relieve symptoms of many different types of cancer. In brachytherapy, radiation is delivered for a set length of time by a radioactive source that comes in the form of a small seed. The dose of radiation and length of time prescribed will depend on the tumor's size and location.

There are several ways to give brachytherapy. Your doctors have decided that a vicryl mesh implant is needed to treat your tumor. It is a flexible piece of mesh that has tiny radioactive seeds attached to it. The radioactive seeds destroy microscopic cancer cells that may be left behind after a tumor is removed. Your surgeon and radiation oncologist will work together to decide on placement of the mesh implant.

The Implant

The seeds attached to the mesh implant are actually small metal pellets. They are similar in size and shape to a grain of rice. The mesh surrounding the seeds eventually will dissolve in your body. The seeds, however, stay forever.

The seeds lose their radioactivity slowly:

Iodine-125 about 1 year

Cesium-131 about 6 months

After this time, the seeds are no longer considered radioactive. Cancer cells are most sensitive to radiation at the time they are dividing. It's important to have radiation present over a long period of time to attack the cancer while the cells are dividing.

Preparation and Surgery

Your doctor may order routine lab work and x-rays. You will have these done before the day of your surgery.

Before the implant is placed, you will be asked to sign a consent form to have brachytherapy. You will also sign a consent form for the surgery.

Your radiation oncologist will be present during your surgery and will determine the number of seeds that need to be placed in the mesh to effectively treat the area.

During your hospital stay, you will be brought to the Radiation Oncology Department to have some x-rays of your implant site. These x-rays are a required part of your medical record

At Home Activity

You may be very tired for a few weeks after brachytherapy and/or surgery. You should plan rest periods throughout your day. Your surgeon will talk with you about activities you can and cannot do.

Diet

You may go back to your normal diet after you leave the hospital, unless your surgeon tells you otherwise.

Safety precautions

Children should not sit on your lap for more than 5 minutes each day for:

6 months following an iodine-125 implant

3 months following a cesium-131 implant

When possible, remain at least 3 feet away from a pregnant woman for:

3 months following an iodine-125 implant

3 months following a cesium-131 implant

Touching, kissing, and shaking hands with a pregnant woman briefly are permissible.

Family members and friends may use the same tableware, dishes, linen, clothing, and toilet facilities as you without a risk of radioactivity.

Touching, kissing, or shaking hands with others will not make them radioactive.

Follow-up

Your follow-up appointments are very important. You will be scheduled to see the radiation oncologist approximately one month after your surgery. You might want to schedule this follow-up on the same day as other doctor appointments, if it is convenient for you.

Radiation Oncologist: _____

Radiation Oncology Nurse: _____

Department Phone Number: _____