

## **Combination Prostate Brachytherapy and External Beam Radiation**

### **Cesium-131 radioactive permanent implants (To be used with the “Prostate Seed Implant patient instruction” booklet)**

**Cesium-131 isotope is the highest energy and shortest half-life (9.7 days) isotope used for brachytherapy.**

#### **The plan:**

A Zolodex injection is given approximately three months prior to the implant procedure and again about the time of the procedure, with external beam radiation to start two months after the implant procedure. Zolodex injections last about three months. These injections are given at Camino Medical Group’s Infusion Center, 582 South Sunnyvale Avenue in Sunnyvale.

Hormone ablation therapy with subcutaneous Zolodex injections temporarily lower serum testosterone (male hormone). This works synergistically with the radiation to fight prostate cancer. Zolodex may cause hot flashes and loss of libido that can last several months after the therapy is completed.

Final instructions are given at a preoperative visit, scheduled approximately two weeks prior to the procedure. At this visit we will also perform a repeat prostate ultrasound to determine an exact size of the prostate in order to calculate an appropriate radiation dose. If your cancer is aggressive, we may biopsy the seminal vesicles at that time. This will feel like a “mini” version of the prostate biopsy. These glands are attached to the prostate and can be an area of cancer spread. If the biopsy is positive we can place seeds in these glands at the same time as well.

#### **The procedure:**

The brachytherapy implant procedure is performed under an approximately 1 hour general anesthesia procedure as an outpatient in the hospital. You may be discharged with a “foley” catheter to drain the urine overnight as some men may have difficulty urinating immediately after the procedure due to prostate swelling. You will be instructed in how to remove the tube yourself the following morning. The needles will enter your body in the area between your scrotal sac and the anus. No dressing or special attention is needed. You may shower immediately if desired. You may experience blood in the rectum or urine for several days. Most patients have relatively little in the way of discomfort afterwards and may often resume normal activities by the second day. Please see the “patient instruction” booklet for more details. The implant is a “two-man” procedure done by a urologist and a radiation therapist.

**Post procedure:**

Your discharge medications will include Cipro antibiotic, Vicodin (if severe pain ensues), Pyridium or Phenazopyridium for discomfort or urgent urination (turns the urine orange in color). Regular use of ibuprofen (eg. Motrin or Advil) three times daily is also very helpful if you are uncomfortable. You may also be given a prescription for Flomax which can help a slow urinary stream. Take one to two capsules at bedtime for a 24 hour effect.

You may begin to feel the effects of the radiation somewhere in the two to six week range after the implants are placed, and usually taper off in the following weeks to months. These side effects may include urgent or frequent trips to the bathroom for either bowel movements or urination.

Make a follow-up appointment to see us two weeks after the procedure, **but contact us sooner if you do not think you are able to fully empty your bladder**. At this time we will obtain a noncontrast CT scan of the pelvis at Camino Medical Group to determine where the seeds are located and calculate the dose of radiation you received. We will be rechecking your PSA level several months thereafter.

The external beam radiation portion of your treatment will begin about two months after the implant. The radiation physician will handle this portion of your care. Please arrange to see us back about three months after completing the radiation. Please come by our front desk one week prior to your appointment to get a lab slip to get a PSA level so the results will be available for review when we see you.