

Targeted Radiation

High-dose-rate brachytherapy maximizes radiation treatments while minimizing risks.

“As good as radiation therapy is in treating cancerous tumors, it still poses a threat to nearby healthy tissue,” observes board-certified radiation oncologist Lawrence D. Hochman, DO, FACRO, of Florida Cancer Institute (FCI). “Radiation exposure is cumulative, so patients who receive traditional external beam radiation may find that their treatment options are limited in the future if their cancer recurs or if they develop new cancers.

“High-dose-rate [HDR] brachytherapy helps reduce this limitation. It allows us to deliver precisely targeted doses of radiation either within a tumor, within a tumor cavity following surgery or very near a tumor while limiting exposure to nearby healthy tissue.”

Recognizing the importance of this leading-edge therapy for patients in their own community, the radiation oncologists at Florida Cancer Institute designed three of their

offices — in New Port Richey, Brooksville and Zephyrhills — to include shielded treatment suites to accommodate a Nucletron mobile remote afterloader for delivery of HDR brachytherapy, and that equipment will be in service shortly, traveling among FCI’s offices to the patients who need it most.

Many uses

HDR brachytherapy is already used in treating a variety of cancers, including bile duct, esophageal, prostate and lung cancers. Brain cancers, too, have been treated experimentally, and other cancers are being studied.



Gerald J. Robbins, MD • Lawrence D. Hochman, DO, FACRO
Cynthia Jensen, DO • Gail Shaw Wright, MD, FACP, FCCP
Mamta T. Choksi, MD

“In West Pasco,” he informs, “we see the greatest need for HDR brachytherapy in treating breast and gynecologic cancers among patients at high risk

for recurrence.”

Traditional adjuvant treatment following breast-conserving surgery is external beam whole breast irradiation five days a week for six and a half weeks.

“Whole breast irradiation leads about forty percent of women eligible for breast-conserving therapy



Lawrence D. Hochman, DO, is board certified in Radiation Oncology. He received his training in Radiation Oncology through the Baylor College of Medicine Affiliated Hospitals, The Methodist Hospital, The Houston Veterans Administration Medical Center, and Ben Taub General Hospital in Houston. Dr. Hochman has a special interest in brachytherapy for prostate, gynecological and breast tumors.

to undergo mastectomy because of the impact such a lengthy regimen would have on their lives,” says Dr. Hochman. “Twenty percent of women who have lumpectomies fail to complete recommended adjuvant radiation therapy for the same reason.”

He adds that women with gynecological cancers traditionally spend two days hospitalized in isolation while a radioactive source implanted in the vaginal canal continually delivers a low dose of radiation to the treatment area. The hospital stay is expensive, and precautions are needed to protect others from radiation exposure.

HDR brachytherapy offers a better option for treating both

types of cancer in select patients.

MammoSite brachytherapy is administered twice a day for five days. It involves placing a balloon catheter into the lumpectomy cavity and inserting a radioactive source along the catheter and into the balloon. The procedure takes about

five to ten minutes.

HDR brachytherapy also allows women to receive adjuvant therapy for their gynecologic cancers on an outpatient basis, with the added benefit of eliminating the risk of exposure to others.

Says Dr. Hochman, “At Florida Cancer Institute, we are

PLEASE VISIT THE FLORIDA CANCER INSTITUTE LOCATION MOST CONVENIENT FOR YOU.

NEW PORT RICHEY
8763 River Crossing Blvd.
(727) 842-8411

HUDSON
13906 Lakeshore Blvd., Suite 330
(727) 863-8563

SPRING HILL
7154 Medical Center Dr.
(352) 596-1926

ZEPHYRHILLS
38010 Medical Center Ave.
(813) 783-1676

SPRING HILL
10441 Quality Dr.
(directly across from Spring Hill Regional Hospital)
(352) 688-7744

proud to offer HDR brachytherapy as an important part of our treatment planning for patients in our community.”

FHCN—Bille S. Noakes

Yes! Please send me additional information about cancer treatment.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Mail to: Florida Cancer Institute, P.O. Box 5562, Spring Hill, FL 34611 **Attn:** Vince Vanni

The Staff of FCI invite you to visit them on the Web at www.floridacancerinstitute.us.