

## Radiopeptide treatment

### Why has the doctor prescribed radiopeptide treatment?

You will have already had some information from the Nuclear Medicine team and the doctor will have discussed with you the treatment best suited for your type of tumour.

### What is radiopeptide treatment?

Radiopeptide treatment is a radioactive substance that can be given as an injection. It is a mixture of octreotide and a radioactive substance called yttrium. The tumour recognises the octreotide and absorbs it, which makes the radiation stick to the tumour.

### How is radiopeptide treatment given?

On the day of treatment, you will have a small plastic tube (cannula) inserted into a vein in your arm. We will then give you two medicines through the cannula – one is a steroid which will prevent any inflammation in your tumour and any unnecessary pain. The other is an anti-sickness medicine which will prevent any nausea. We will then connect a drip to the cannula and give you a fluid called synthamin for eight hours. This is used to protect your kidneys from any unwanted radiation. During this time, we will interrupt the drip to give the radiopeptide treatment. This is also given through the same cannula using a syringe pump and takes about 20 minutes. After the infusion, the drip will be reconnected for the remainder of the eight hours.

### Are there any side effects?

Unlike chemotherapy and radiotherapy, the side effects are minimal. You may feel tired, lethargic and experience some nausea (feeling sick). There are some effects on your blood count. Your clinician will ask you to have regular blood tests which are arranged through your GP surgery.

### Will I be radioactive?

Yes, for a short while. The type of radiation used in this treatment means you will be safe to go home once you have been checked by your doctor. The radioactivity in the tumour will last for some time in order to produce the maximum effect on the tumour cells, but does not pose a risk to leave hospital.

### Will I have to stay in hospital?

Yes, however this is just for practical reasons as you will need to stay for various scans following the treatment. To ensure that you are cared for safely, we will ask you to stay in your single room until your doctor and the medical physics staff advise you can go home. This will be discussed on



an individual basis, as everybody has different home circumstances. For further information, please see The Royal Marsden booklet *Radionuclide therapy*.

### **Will there be any scans?**

There will possibly be a series of scans just like you have experienced for other investigations in Nuclear Medicine. These are to check that the medicine has gone to the tumour and will be carried out following your treatment.

### **How many treatments will I need?**

Radiopeptide treatment is usually given in two treatments, 8–10 weeks apart. This will be discussed on an individual basis.

### **Following treatment**

Following the two treatments your doctor will ask for you to have further CT and Octreo scans. We will arrange these for a date, place and time convenient to you.

### **Further information and support**

#### **Neuroendocrine Cancer UK**

Tel (general): 01926 883 487

Nurse helpline: 0800 434 6476

Website: [www.neuroendocrinecancer.org.uk](http://www.neuroendocrinecancer.org.uk)

#### **Contact details**

You should have been seen by a clinician and or a nurse before receiving targeted radionuclide therapy. They will provide you with their individual contact details.

If you have any queries or further questions, please contact us:

Sutton: 020 8661 3286 / 3287

Chelsea: 020 7811 8541

Alternatively, please contact:

**The Royal Marsden Macmillan Hotline:** 020 8915 6899

(available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Should you require information in an alternative format, please contact The Royal Marsden Help Centre.

