

## Metastatic cancer

Cancer cells can spread to almost any part of the body. The part of the body where cancer first appears is called the primary site. When cancer spreads to lymph nodes near the primary tumor, it is called lymph node involvement or regional disease. When cancer spreads to other areas of the body, such as other organs or to lymph nodes more distant from the primary site, it is called metastatic cancer or metastatic disease.

Cancer that spreads and becomes metastatic is still defined in terms of where it started. For example, breast cancer that has spread to another part of the body, such as the bones or brain, is still called breast cancer, and treatments for such metastases will be those that are most effective for metastatic breast cancer.

In some cases, a metastatic tumor can appear before its source, the primary tumor, has been discovered. In these cases, the cancer is known as "cancer of unknown primary."

When metastatic cancer appears, it is often in these areas of the body:

- Bladder
- Bone
- Bone marrow (leukemia)
- Brain
- Liver
- Lungs
- Meninges
- Pelvis
- Peritoneum
- Rectum
- Skin
- Spinal cord
- Uterus
- Vagina

UCSF Radiation Oncology is part of the UCSF Comprehensive Cancer Center, a member of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network; an alliance of 26 of the world's leading cancer centers. We are known, nationally and internationally, for our advanced and state-of-the art treatments for metastatic cancer. We offer a full range of treatments for metastatic cancers, individually customized for each patient, including:

- Stereotactic Radiosurgery (SRS) <sup>[1]</sup>, including Gamma Knife and CyberKnife
- Stereotactic Body Radiotherapy (SBRT) <sup>[2]</sup> including Cyberknife
- Intensity-modulated radiation therapy (IMRT) <sup>[3]</sup>, including Tomotherapy
- Conformal radiation therapy (CRT)
- Lung Motion Management including 4DCT
- Image Guided Radiation Therapy (IGRT) <sup>[4]</sup> including 3D and 4D conebeam CT (CBCT)
- Hyperthermia <sup>[5]</sup>

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UCSF Main Site

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#### Links

[1] <https://radonc.ucsf.edu/stereotactic-radiosurgery-srs>

[2] <https://radonc.ucsf.edu/stereotactic-body-radiation-therapy-sbrt>

[3] <https://radonc.ucsf.edu/intensity-modulated-radiation-therapy-imrt>

[4] <https://radonc.ucsf.edu/image-guided-radiation-therapy-igrt>

[5] <https://radonc.ucsf.edu/hyperthermia>