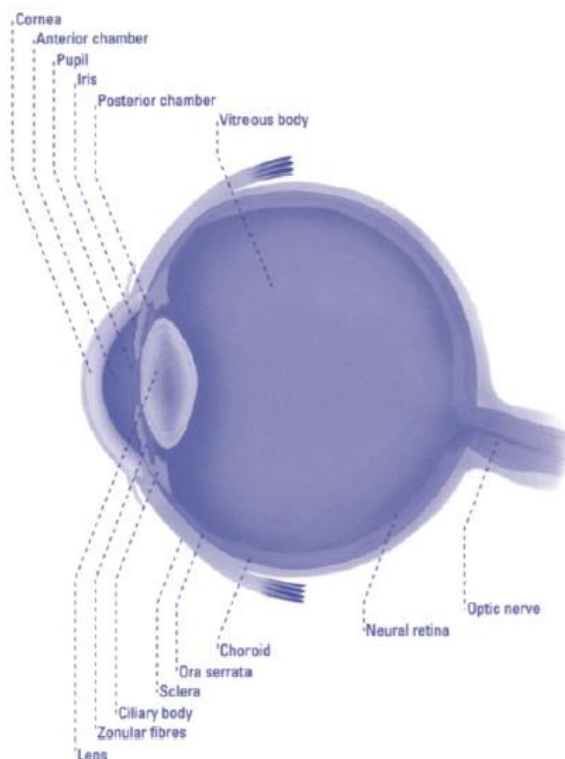




Eye Plaque

PMH

Patient Information Booklet



Patient Education
Improving Health Through Education

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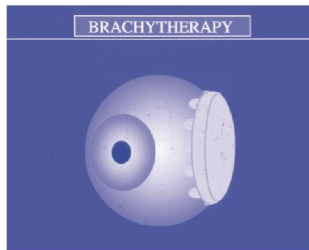
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General Information

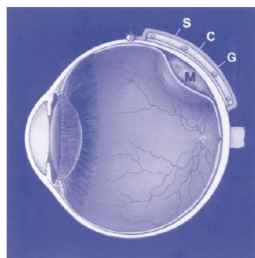


Choroidal melanoma is an uncommon cancer but is the most common primary cancer occurring within the eye. It is a cancer of the pigmented cells of the choroid of the eye. It is diagnosed by clinical appearance, photographs and ultrasound. It arises from the pigmented cells of the choroid of the eye and is not a tumour that started somewhere else and spreads to the eye. Malignant means that the tumour is a cancer, which may metastasize, that is, spread to other parts of the body. All choroidal melanomas should be treated as though they were malignant.

Treatment

Radioactive plaque therapy is a form of treatment, which allows the eye cancer specialist to destroy your tumour without removing the eye. This form of treatment can affect normal parts of your eye and cause visual disturbances.

However, with careful treatment planning, the ability to destroy the cancer is increased while side effects are diminished. Radioactive Eye Plaques contain small seeds of Iodine -125 that are used to deliver radiation to your tumour. The gold of the plaque blocks 99% of radiation, therefore, when the plaque is sewn to the outside of your eye (just over the tumour) the radiation is directed into the eye.



M - melanoma
S - seed carrier cover
C - seed carrier
G - gold shield

Plaques come in various sizes, between 12 and 20 mm. A plaque will be chosen to cover your entire tumour plus at least a 2 mm. "safety margin". The extra area is included to make sure the entire tumour is within the treatment field.

The surgeon is able to accurately place the radiation plaque over the base of the tumour by looking into the eye, by shining a light into



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the eye and seeing where the tumour casts a shadow on the outside of the eye, and with the use of ultrasound.

Radiation treatment is continuous and typically lasts up to 7 days while the plaque is in place. At the end of treatment your tumour has been given all the necessary radiation. The plaque is then surgically removed and no radioactivity remains in your body.

Commonly Asked Questions

How will it feel?

Most patients report some discomfort or itchiness within the first few days. The amount of discomfort will depend on the location of the plaque. If the plaque is located in front or just below the eyelid, you may feel more discomfort. However, this usually settles down but medication to relieve the discomfort can be given on a regular basis. Also the eye drops and dressing changes are found to be soothing.

What does the dressing consist of?

The nurse or caregiver will instill the drops, and apply fresh and loose soft gauze. This is done 3-4 times a day.

What radiation precautions should be taken during treatment?

When the eye plaque is placed on your eye you are not radioactive. During your treatment, items that you touch are not radioactive. As well, your bodily wastes (urine and stool) are not radioactive. After the eye plaque has been removed you are not radioactive.

The radiation comes from Iodine-125 seeds that are placed in the gold plaque. They emit low energy radiation. This means that almost all of the radiation is delivered to the eye. A very small amount may exit from the plaque, but this is not significant and it is safe for others to be nearby.

As a precaution, the lead eye patch you were given should be worn when there are others present in the same room with you. It must be worn if there is another individual sharing the same bed with you. Whenever you are alone, it may be removed for your comfort.

The lead eye patch does not become radioactive. **The lead eye patch should be returned following eye plaque removal.**

There are no restrictions in the activities of care providers and family members, including children and pregnant individuals, when dealing with patients having this treatment. However, we do recommend that children or pregnant individuals remain at a distance of more than 2 meters

(6 feet) from you and they should keep the time spent with you to a minimum. When you have the implant in place, we recommend that you stay close to your home, the Lodge or the hospital should you require any assistance.

In case of an accident or medical emergency members of the Ocular Oncology Service at Princess Margaret Hospital are to be contacted via Switchboard at 416-946-2000. Other medical staff may require information about your radiation treatment. Contact telephone numbers of the ophthalmologist will be listed on a green card that you will carry in your purse/wallet when you have the eye plaque in place. You do not need to carry it after the eye plaque has been removed.

If you have any questions, speak to your ophthalmologist or contact the Corporate Radiation Safety Office at 416-340-4801.

Am I radioactive after the plaque is removed?

NO once the eye plaque is removed there is no source of radiation in your body.

Will my hair fall out from plaque radiation?

Eye plaque therapy is not known to cause hair loss, nausea, brain damage, or affect the other eye.

How quickly will my tumour go away after plaque radiation?

The tumour gradually shrinks over many months following radiation. Shrinkage can continue for a few years. Measurements are taken at every visit every few months following the radiation treatment.

Most tumours shrink to about 40% of their original size but little to no shrinkage can still mean the tumour is controlled.

What will happen to my vision?

Side effects from the treatment may cause blurring and dimming and in rare occasions total loss of vision (in the eye with the tumour). The amount of vision loss depends on how your vision was before treatment and how close the tumour is to the centre of your retina as well as how sensitive your tissues are to radiation. The radiation does not affect the vision in your other eye.

Discharge Information

Once you are discharged you will instill eye drops 3–4 times daily for about 2–4 weeks. These drops contain antibiotics, steroids, and medicines to relax your eye. They also help the eye to heal. For the

first week after surgery you may notice a little blood in your tears. This is normal. You should gently wash the outside of your eyelid with a warm clean washcloth. Do not let matter accumulate to form a crust on your eyelids. Your eye may be slightly reddened due to the blood vessels in your eye being irritated. This is also normal. You should take the following precautions to assist in the healing process:

- do not rub your eye for the first 2 weeks after surgery
- do not apply creams and makeup in the area for the first 2-4 weeks

You can return to normal activity 2-4 weeks after the eye plaque is removed.

If you notice the following symptoms report to your nurse or doctor or go to your local emergency department:

- bleeding from your eye
- excessive pain
- excessive swelling of the eyelids or any part of the eye

Follow Up

It is recommended that you are examined 2 weeks after plaque radiation, and then as per the doctors request thereafter.

If you are from out of town, you will be referred to your local Ophthalmologist. You will return to Princess Margaret Hospital annually.

This is to ensure that the tumour is not regrowing and that there are no radiation related problems, which may need treatment. You should also have twice yearly medical checks with your family doctor, internist, or medical oncologist.

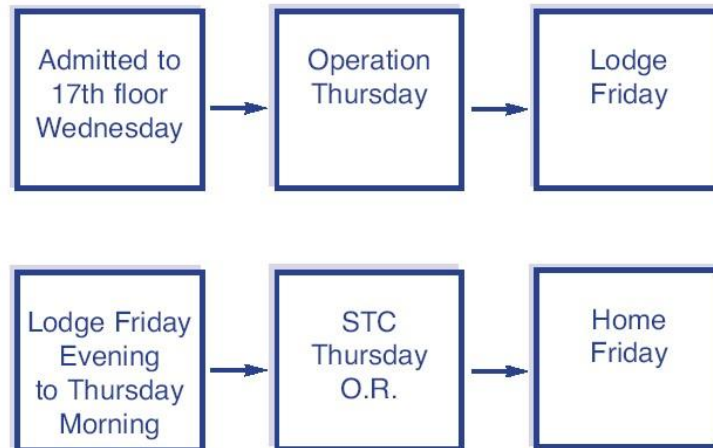
What to expect when you are admitted to Princess Margaret Hospital

You will first go to our Pre-Admission Clinic where you will:

- be seen by a Physician who will review the procedure with you as well as perform a physical examination
- sign your consent for insertion and removal of the eye plaque
- have blood taken
- have a chest x-ray and or ECG if the Physician deems it necessary

You will then go to the inpatient unit where a bed has been assigned to you. The unit secretary will register you in our system and the nurse will review any questions you may have. The night before your surgery you will not be able to eat or drink after midnight.

On the morning of the operation you will be taken to the operating room on a stretcher, in a hospital gown accompanied by a member of the inpatient hospital staff.



The usual admission day is Wednesday.
However, there may be slight variations to admission day
depending upon O.R. (Operating Room) availability.

What to expect when you go to the Lodge

The Princess Margaret Hospital Lodge is a unique place for cancer patients and their families who come to Toronto for treatment. It is a self-care facility with 24-hour nursing coverage to assist and support patients during the active phase of their cancer treatment. The mission of the Lodge is to provide optimal care and support to all patients through excellence in interdisciplinary teamwork. Patients must be self-reliant and able to walk up and down a flight of stairs. Family members are able to stay providing we have space, however, priority is given to patients. Lodge rates are reasonable and considerably less than a hotel in the downtown area.

- Patient Population: Adults (over 16)
- Number of Beds: 105 (mostly double rooms)
- Patient Length of Stay: Period of active treatment
- Transportation to Hospital: Shuttle bus between 8:00 am - 5:30 pm
- Dining Facilities: Available during weekdays, limited dining on weekends
- Computer Access: Available on site

To contact us:

Address	545 Jarvis Street, Toronto, ON, M4Y 2H8
Main desk	416-413-7417
Booking office	416-413-7402
Website	www.pmhlodge.org



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What to expect when you are admitted to the Short Term Care Unit.

Short Term Care Unit (18B)

Open from Monday to Friday

Short Term Care is designed for the care of patients requiring evaluation, investigation, surgery, or treatment and for whom the expected length of stay is to be 5 days or less.

Patients admitted to STC should bring any medication they are currently taking as well as personal care items.

The Ocular Oncology Clinic at Princess Margaret Hospital supports the information in this booklet.

Contact information:

Ocular Oncology Clinic, PMH

610 University Ave., 18th Floor

Toronto, ON M5G 2M9

416-946-2000 ext. 4802

PMH Locating for further assistance: 416-946-2000