

Proton beam therapy and urology cancer

The Christie NHS Foundation Trust now hosts the first NHS funded high energy proton beam therapy service in the UK. However, it is not appropriate to treat all kinds of cancers with proton beam therapy.

All patients with cancer in the UK are discussed in specialist meetings with surgeons, oncologists, radiologists and pathologists. It is during these meetings that patients who have a known benefit from proton beam therapy are identified and referred to the proton panel.

There is a nationally agreed list of possible cancers where proton beam therapy might be useful, mostly in children and young adults. Any patients considered to be eligible have their case reviewed by a national panel of experts.

At present, common adult urological cancers such as prostate, bladder and kidney cancer are NOT part of the approved list. Randomised studies outside the UK are currently being conducted with regard to the role of proton beam therapy in localised prostate cancer. However, to date there is no known evidence that proton beam therapy provides significantly higher rates of tumour control than high dose X-ray therapy in this setting. Furthermore, some side effects such as mild self-limiting rectal bleeding may be more common following high dose proton therapy than with intensity modulated conformal radiotherapy or high dose X-ray treatment.



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We already know that patients where cancer has spread to other sites, for example, bones receive absolutely no benefit from proton beam therapy, but they very well may benefit from other forms of radiotherapy.

Once the UK proton service has been established for children, young adults and those other rare tumours where British patients have been going overseas, there will be the possibility of clinical trials in urological cancers, where proton beam therapy may be involved. Patients with common urological cancers will not be treated in the NHS centres outside of clinical trials so that we can absolutely establish whether it is safe and whether it has any benefit. As a leading cancer hospital, The Christie is committed to the highest standards of care and safety, including being involved in innovative research.

If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

The Christie is committed to producing high quality, evidence based information for patients. Our patient information adheres to the principles and quality statements of the Information Standard. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact **the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net**

For information and advice visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham, Salford or Macclesfield. Opening times can vary, please check before making a special journey.

Contact The Christie Hotline for urgent support and specialist advice
The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

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