

Stereotactic Radiosurgery comes to Trinitas Cancer Center



Trinitas is proud to announce the launch of their new Stereotactic Radiosurgery program (SRS). SRS represents an important non-invasive tool in the treatment of certain malignant and benign brain tumors. SRS uses highly focused beams of radiation to painlessly shrink or eliminate tumors and other abnormalities. SRS enables doctors to precisely deliver higher doses of radiation on an outpatient basis and in fewer treatment sessions as compared to traditional radiation therapy. Recovery and healing are fast, and patients can resume normal activities shortly after treatment. **“Radiosurgery involves close coordination among a multidisciplinary team of medical experts**

including neurosurgery, radiation oncology and diagnostic radiology. Our team is committed to providing the highest quality care for each patient by combining expertise and state-of-the-art technology” said Adam Lipson, MD of Union County Neurosurgical Associates, PA. With SRS, beams are shaped to match the contours of the tumor and delivered from many different angles, all converging precisely at the planned target location. “We are excited to offer this important new treatment technology to our patients, which is just the latest addition to the state-of-the-art treatment options already available at Trinitas” expressed Clarissa Henson, MD, Chair, Radiation Oncology. Stereotactic radiosurgery may be a treatment option for patients with primary brain tumors such as acoustic neuromas, anaplastic astrocytomas, chordomas, craniopharyngiomas, glioblastomas, gliomas, hemangioblastomas, meningiomas, pineal tumors, pituitary adenomas, and some brain tumors that have metastasized from other parts of the body.

Urologic Oncology Tumor Boards off to a Great Start

On Friday, September 5, Trinitas Cancer Center hosted the first dedicated Urologic Oncology Tumor Board. This tumor board is part of the newly established Prostate Cancer Program at Trinitas under the leadership of Brett Opell, MD, board certified Urologist at Trinitas Hospital and partner at Advanced Urology Associates group practice in Elizabeth and Rahway. “Tumor boards create a multidisciplinary forum for physicians to share their expert knowledge and arrive at the optimal strategies for achieving the best clinical results for patients battling cancer,” said Dr. Opell. The second Urologic Oncology Tumor Board likewise took place to a packed room of physicians on Friday, October 31st at the Trinitas Cancer Center. Future dates will be announced through Trinitas Hospital’s Physician Services department.



Protecting Cognitive Function in Patients Receiving Whole-Brain Radiotherapy

RTOG[®] RADIATION THERAPY ONCOLOGY GROUP Trinitas Cancer Center launched a new clinical study to compare the effects of the drug Memantine with a placebo to determine whether cognitive function is protected in patients receiving whole-brain radiotherapy. The prestigious Radiation Therapy Oncology Group (RTOG) – a national clinical trials cooperative group – is sponsoring this study for patients with metastatic cancer to the brain. Whole-brain radiotherapy uses radiation to destroy cancer cells in patients who have brain metastases – tumors that spread to the brain which originated in tissues or organs in other body regions. Over a period of several weeks, whole-brain radiotherapy is often successful in substantially shrinking brain metastases and in alleviating negative symptoms. However, patients may also experience cognitive side effects which may increase over time. Because there is limited data on neurocognitive function, researchers are unsure whether this decline in cognitive function stems from chemotherapy, radiation, the cancer itself, or all three. Patients enrolled in this clinical trial receive a series of cognitive tests over 24 weeks to measure the patient’s cognitive abilities. Clarissa Henson, MD, Chair of Radiation Oncology at Trinitas Cancer Center says, “There are no other randomized trials today that are looking at improving cognitive function following whole-brain radiation therapy. We opened this new trial at Trinitas Cancer Center, because we are passionate about helping our patients live longer and better lives.”

Upcoming Tumor Boards

Breast Tumor Board

Friday December 19 at 7:30am
Conference Room A, 1st floor,
Cancer Center

General Tumor Board

Friday December 5 & 12 at 12:00pm
Trinitas Hospital – 8 South
Conference Room

Support Groups and Lectures for Patients

“Living With Cancer”

A support group for patients and their families, dealing with cancer and life issues. Meetings are held the second Tuesday of every month: Tuesday December 9 from 2:00-4:00 pm at TCCC. Please R.S.V.P. by calling Grisela Hidalgo, LCSW, at 908-994-8535

“Viviendo Con Cancer”

A Support group for Spanish speaking patients and their families. Meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month: December 2 from 2:00-4:00pm at TCCC. Please R.S.V.P. by calling Grisela Hidalgo, LCSW, social worker at 908-994-8535. Those who are bilingual are welcome to attend both groups.

“Made For Me” Boutique

Offers make-up assistance, wigs, mastectomy apparel and other accessories. Thursday December 4th from 10:00am-12:00pm at 2nd Floor Conference Room, Trinitas Hospital Administrative Services Building, 210 Williamson Street. For reservations call Amparo Aguirre, at 908-994-8244.

“Art for Healing”

An interactive art therapy workshop for patients and caregivers. Wednesday December 3 & 17 2008, Wednesday January 7 & 21 2009 from 9:30am-10:30am at Conference Room A, 1st floor, Cancer Center.



Did You Know?

Cheryl Wachtel, RD leads the Oncology Nutrition Program at Trinitas Cancer Center. Cheryl provides nutritional counseling services to patients and their caregivers. Cheryl also leads special nutrition education programs for patients and family members. Cheryl is a Master's level clinician with specialized training and expertise in medical nutrition therapy. Cheryl's primary aim is to help patients optimize their nutritional status to assist them in achieving their treatment goals and improving their quality of life.

HDR Brachytherapy Program Expansion and Relocation Thanks to Generous Support

Trinitas is pleased to offer High-Dose Rate (HDR) Brachytherapy within the comfortable and healing environment of its outpatient Cancer Center. Through two generous contributions from an Elizabeth family, Trinitas was able to relocate the existing HDR service to its state of the art 35,000 square-foot Cancer Center and expand the clinical program through the purchase of new advanced brachytherapy applicators. Patients are now able to receive complete continuity of care comfortably and conveniently in one location. "With these generous gifts we are able to continue to affirm our strong commitment to cancer care that is patient centered," said Gary S. Horan, FACHE, President and CEO of Trinitas Hospital. At Trinitas Cancer Center, HDR is used to treat endometrial, cervical, endobronchial, and breast cancers; the latter with the Mammosite treatment device for women. "We are now able to significantly expand the HDR program to include new treatment sites and are exploring the possibility of adding a prostate HDR program in the near future," commented Clarissa Febles Henson, MD, Chair of Radiation Oncology at Trinitas. "We applaud these kind donors for their generosity," explained Nadine Brechner, Executive Director of the Trinitas Health Foundation "This is a good example of people helping people because these gifts ultimately allow cancer patients to have all of their treatments and visits in one location rather than moving around from one area to another."

Women's Health & Wellness Luncheon featuring talks on Breast Health

On Thursday October 23rd, Trinitas hosted a Women's Health and Wellness Luncheon at the Galloping Hill Inn in Union, in recognition of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. More than 150 women attended the luncheon featuring talks on breast health by James H. Frost, M.D., F.A.C.S, of Advanced Surgical Associates, Labib E. Riachi, M.D., F.A.C.O.G., of Center of Advanced Pelvic Surgery, and Clarissa Henson, M.D., Chair Radiation Oncology at Trinitas CCC. "I commend Trinitas Hospital for organizing this event, commented Dr. Barbara Gaba Provost, Vice President for Academic Affairs Union County College, "the physician presentations were extremely informative and it was a wonderful networking opportunity that I hope will continue." The event also included breast cancer survivors as models in a fashion show sponsored by Lord & Taylor of Westfield and a Fall make-over presentation by Bobbi Brown Cosmetics of Montclair, New Jersey.



Trinitas, Proud Member of National Consortium of Breast Centers



Trinitas is among the newest members of the prestigious National Consortium of Breast Centers (NCBC), which is dedicated to promoting excellence in breast health care. This consortium allows specialists and departments to come together to improve patient care and patient experience. "Diagnosing and managing breast disease is a complex process that requires multidisciplinary coordination," explains Nancy DiLiegro, PhD, FACHE, Vice President of Clinical Services-Administration, "and membership in NCBC, allows Trinitas to share in the commitment to providing the highest quality care to our patients."

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