

MammoSite and interstitial breast brachytherapy: choices for a shorter treatment time for breast cancer

“The radiation treatment of breast cancer is not only better than it was 10 years ago but also is of shorter duration in certain circumstances,” reports Kathryn L. Kepes, MD, a board-certified radiation oncologist at the Center for Radiation Oncology.

Because technology is changing, a woman now has a choice concerning her treatment after a lumpectomy.

Breast cancer has been treatable for many years by mastectomy or lumpectomy followed by radiation. Dr. Kepes is one of the first physicians in Florida to offer an exciting alternative to the standard treatment for selected patients, and she has been performing this procedure for three years with outstanding results.

According to Dr. Kepes, “When a patient undergoes a lumpectomy, or removal of the cancer and some surrounding normal breast tissue, radiation therapy is necessary to decrease the chance of can-

cer recurring in the breast. The standard option for radiation therapy to the breast is external beam radiation, where the radiation is delivered to the entire breast from a linear accelerator.”

In addition to these more conventional treatments, which usually last six and one-half weeks, Dr. Kepes offers two choices for delivering high-dose radiation to the lumpectomy site (the area in the breast where the cancer initially presented) in a short period of time: MammoSite and interstitial breast brachytherapy.

A surgeon places the MammoSite catheter, which has a surgical balloon at the end of it, in the lumpectomy site, either during the lumpectomy or at the surgeon’s office after the lumpectomy has been performed. Interstitial breast brachytherapy involves multiple smaller catheters, which are placed around the lumpectomy site by the radiation oncologist in an office procedure under CT guidance using local anesthesia.

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Kathryn Kepes, MD, is a board-certified radiation oncologist affiliated with Brandon Regional Hospital, South Bay Hospital, Florida Hospital Zephyrhills, Pasco Regional Medical Center, Memorial Hospital, South Florida Baptist Hospital, Town & Country Hospital, and Tampa General Hospital.



Andrew W. O’Leary, MD, is a board-certified radiation oncologist affiliated with Brandon Regional Hospital, Florida Hospital Zephyrhills, Memorial Hospital, Pasco Regional Medical Center, South Bay Hospital, Tampa General Hospital, and Town & Country Hospital.

High-dose radiation is delivered through the catheters. Both procedures involve 10- to 15-minute treatments twice a day for five days, with the catheters removed at the completion of treatment. The entire breast is not treated — only the lumpectomy site and some surrounding normal breast tissue.

Dr. Kepes’s associate, Andrew W. O’Leary, DO, states, “Breast brachytherapy has become an acceptable alternative to external beam radiation therapy in selected patients. If the patient is not a candidate for MammoSite, she may be for the interstitial catheters, as we are able to conform our needles to a more irregularly shaped lumpectomy site.”

Dr. O’Leary, who recently joined the Center for Radiation Oncology, is also a board-certified radiation oncologist. He shares Dr. Kepes’s enthusiasm for breast brachytherapy as a treatment option for select patients.

Drs. Kepes and O’Leary are available to see breast cancer patients in consultation. Anyone interested in more information should contact Dr. Kepes, Dr. O’Leary, or Maria Appel, RN, BSN, OCN, director of nursing, at (813) 661-6339.

The Center for Radiation Oncology is a provider with all major insurance companies. **FHCN**

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Drs. Kepes and O’Leary welcome calls regarding this article or other related topics. For further information, call **(813) 662-6024**. See one of their four locations:

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(813) 661-6339

S U N C I T Y C E N T E R
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(813) 633-5513

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The center also has full treatment facilities at Moffitt Cancer Center at Tampa General Hospital, and the Plant City Cancer Treatment Center at South Florida Baptist Hospital.

Drs. Kepes and O’Leary are available to speak to groups and organizations on a wide variety of cancer-related topics. They have developed workshops on prostate, breast, gynecological, lung, and skin cancers. To schedule a speaking engagement, please call **(813) 662-6024, ext 1**.

Please visit the Center for Radiation Oncology website at **www.centerforradiation.com**.