



SRS/SRT:

Stereotactic Radiosurgery and Stereotactic Radiotherapy

What is SRS/SRT?

Stereotactic Radiosurgery (SRS) and Stereotactic Radiotherapy (SRT) are highly focused, non-surgical radiation treatments used to treat small tumors or abnormalities in the brain. SRS delivers a single high-dose treatment, while SRT delivers several high-dose treatments (typically 3–5) over multiple days. Both use precise imaging and a custom-fitted mask to deliver treatment while sparing healthy brain tissue.

Why SRS/SRT Might Be Recommended:

- You have one or more small brain tumors or metastases.
- Surgery is not recommended due to risk or preference.
- A high-precision, non-invasive treatment is desired.
- You have previously received radiation and need targeted treatment.

Before Your Treatment

- A custom mask will be made to keep your head completely still during treatment. Sometimes a custom mouthguard is also used. The mask is made from a warm, moldable plastic mesh that cools and conforms to your head.
- You will have a CT scan with your mask in place. The mask making and scan typically takes about 30 minutes to complete.
- An MRI may also be needed for treatment to be planned. This may be done at an outside facility.

Treatment Planning

Your radiation oncologist, medical physicist, and dosimetrist will use your CT and MRI scans to design a precise treatment plan. This process usually takes several days. The clinical staff will coordinate your treatment schedule with you either at the time of your CT scan or will call you once the plan is ready.

What to Expect During Treatment

- You will wear your custom mask and lie in the same position used during your scans.
- Imaging (cone-beam CT and a blue light surface scanner) will be used to ensure your exact position is correct before treatment.
- SRS involves a single session lasting about 20–30 minutes. SRT involves 3 to 5 sessions over 1–2 weeks, with each session lasting 20–30 minutes.
- You must remain very still, but treatment is painless. You will see your radiation oncologist during your treatment course to monitor symptoms.

Possible Side Effects

- **Tightness from the mask** — may leave a temporary pattern on your skin.
- **Skin irritation** — redness, dryness, or mild itching around the treated area.
- **Fatigue** — especially near the end of a multi-day course (SRT).
- **Headache or nausea** — typically short term and manageable.
- **Delayed swelling at the treatment site** — uncommon and usually treatable with medications.
- **Small amount of localized hair loss** — may develop in the weeks following treatment and can take up to 3-6 months to start growing back.

Your doctor will discuss any specific risks or side effects based on your treatment plan and tumor location.

After Treatment and Follow-Up

After your final treatment, you will meet with your doctor and nurse to review what to expect in the coming weeks and schedule follow-up visits. Be sure to report any unusual symptoms, such as increasing headaches, balance issues, or vision changes.

When to Contact Us

- If any questions or concerns come up after your treatment, please call the clinic.
- After Hours: Your call will be forwarded to the on-call doctor. Leave your name and number with area code.
