

Moores UCSD Cancer Center Offers Radiation Therapy in Encinitas Facility

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The Department of Radiation Oncology at the Moores UCSD Cancer Center and the UC San Diego Medical Center have opened a satellite facility in Encinitas, offering the same types of radiation therapy services and similar opportunities for participation in clinical trials that are provided at the UC San Diego's La Jolla campus.

"Unlike chemotherapy, radiation therapy is often delivered daily for weeks at a time, and can be a huge time commitment for a patient and the family," said Mary Ann Rose, MD, professor of radiation oncology at the UC San Diego School of Medicine and medical director of the newly opened UCSD Radiation Oncology-North County. "Our new facility is an effort to make the treatments easier, more convenient and less expensive in terms of travel for many of our patients. Cancer patients can get complete radiation treatment in their own community."

The facility, which occupies more than 7,500 square feet, is in clinical space UC San Diego is sub-leasing from the San Diego Cancer Center, at 1200 Garden View Road in Encinitas.

The San Diego Cancer Center's growing relationship with the Moores UCSD Cancer Center is a win-win situation for both organizations and their patients, said San Diego Cancer Center CEO Mark Adler, MD. "The new radiation oncology facility complements existing services at the San Diego Cancer Center and strengthens its ability to serve the needs of cancer patients in North County."

A.J. Mundt, MD, professor and chair of radiation oncology at the UC San Diego Medical Center and the Moores UCSD Cancer Center, echoed these comments. "Radiation oncology is time and labor intensive, and it isn't feasible for patients always to come to La Jolla," he said. The new facility enables the Moores Cancer Center to "become a part of the North County community."

Dr. Rose pointed out that the Encinitas facility offers a versatile array of sophisticated features, including a wide bore CAT scanner that is dedicated solely to radiation treatment planning, and a Varian Eclipse treatment planning system which allows for the complex planning necessary for Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT) and stereotactic radiosurgery. IMRT uses multiple angled beams to precisely shape the radiation field around the periphery of the tumor while also sparing normal tissues in front of and behind the cancer.

Stereotactic radiosurgery is a non-surgical procedure that uses highly focused X-rays to treat brain and spine tumors as well as localized malignancies in the lung and liver. A board certified medical physicist is on site to oversee all treatment planning and delivery.

Dr. Rose also said that the Center contains a state of the art linear accelerator, which "gives us the ability to use radiation therapy to treat all diseases at all sites, from standard radiation therapy for diseases such as breast cancer to IMRT for prostate and head and neck cancers to stereotactic radiosurgery for small tumors in difficult-to-reach places in the body."

The new center features the Trilogy linear accelerator, the same sophisticated technology used at the Moores UCSD Cancer Center in La Jolla. The Trilogy by Varian, Inc., offers powerful technology to pinpoint and destroy

tumors deep inside the body. To ensure accuracy, this machine has the capability for image guided radiation therapy (IGRT) using both cone beam CT scanning and digital diagnostic quality imaging of the patient prior to each treatment. IGRT is the use of imaging in the treatment room to improve the delivery of radiation. With the patient on the treatment table, the Varian Trilogy provides the technology to localize tumors deep within the body daily prior to treatment, greatly improving the accuracy of each treatment.

The Trilogy conforms the radiation dose to the exact size and shape of a tumor in three dimensions, reducing doses to nearby healthy tissue. Such treatment reduces the risk of toxicity and provides the ability to safely deliver higher doses than more conventional accelerators, improving long-term tumor control.

Unlike other stereotactic radiosurgery technologies, including the CyberKnife, Trilogy delivers treatment considerably faster and avoids the need for implanted markers. UCSD physicians have the most experience using this novel technology in the San Diego community.

"We can treat something as complex as a tiny brain tumor in a critical location by providing a single, focused fraction of radiation, and with the same equipment provide simple palliation of pain from bone metastases," Dr. Rose said. "The beauty of the Trilogy is its versatility."

According to Drs. Rose and Mundt, the new radiation oncology facility offers opportunities to participate in the same state of the art radiation clinical trials of new therapies and procedures that are offered at the Moores Cancer Center's La Jolla campus. These include trials offered by the Radiation Therapy Oncology Group and the National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project for a wide range of cancers such as breast, lung and prostate.

For more information and to schedule an appointment, please go to <http://radonc.ucsd.edu> or call 858-246-0500.

The Moores UCSD Cancer Center is one of the nation's 41 National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers, combining research, clinical care and community outreach to advance the prevention, treatment and cure of cancer. For more information, visit <http://health.ucsd.edu/cancer>

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