

Metastatic Spinal Cord Compression

PATHWAY FOR PATIENTS WITH A KNOWN CANCER DIAGNOSIS

This is an Oncological Emergency

All patients with suspected MSCC & neurological symptoms should have an MRI within 24hrs.

If MSCC is confirmed treatment must be started within 24 hours.

All patients with confirmed MSCC will be referred to LEEDS where they will be assessed for both radiotherapy and surgery.

GROUP 1 SYMPTOMS

Symptoms suggestive of MSCC with neurological symptoms and/or signs

- Neurological symptoms including radicular pain, any limb weaknesses, difficulty in walking, sensory loss or bladder or bowel dysfunction
- Neurological signs of spinal cord or cauda equina compression

GROUP 2 SYMPTOMS

Symptoms suggestive of spinal metastases without neurological symptoms and/or signs

- Pain in middle (thoracic) or upper (cervical) spine
- Progressive lower (lumbar) spinal pain
- Severe unremitting lower spinal pain
- Spinal pain aggravated by straining (eg at stool/coughing/sneezing)
- Localised spinal tenderness
- Nocturnal spinal pain preventing sleep

Hospital Referrals

Telephone MSCC Co-ordinator (Chemo line) between 8.30am and 5pm on (01904) 726516, between 5 pm and 8.30am on (01904) 726031

Patient to attend for urgent assessment on AMU.

D/W Duty Consultant Radiologist if suspicious of MSCC

Spinal pain suggestive of spinal metastases and neurological symptoms/signs suggestive of MSCC. Give a stat dose of Dexamethasone 16mg oral plus a PPI. The following day to start dexamethasone 8mg 8am and 2pm. Ensure patient has adequate pain relief to facilitate lying flat for MRI scan.

MRI must be performed within 24hrs

MRI positive for SCC. Radiologist to inform co-ordinator.

Contact on call Clinical Oncology SpR at St. James's (Leeds) (0113 2433144) urgently. The MRI & most recent CT scans must be sent electronically. Complete MSCC referral form (under cancer services on staff room)

Begin discharge planning on admission
Arrange 6/52 OPA

Review by Consultant Oncologist as outpatient

MRI next available urgent slot

MRI negative for SCC

Further investigation and/or referral
Analgesia as required

If clinical advice is required at any time, please contact on call Consultant Oncologist/ Haematologist via switchboard or Acute Oncology nurses on (01904) 724519 (in normal working hours)