



## **Patient instruction for the radiation treatment of inflammatory and degenerative diseases during the COVID-19 pandemic**

Dear Patient,

You have been referred to us by your treating physicians to receive pain-relieving anti-inflammatory X-rays. We would like to give you the following information to explain to you the use of radiation for pain relief in osteoarthritis and inflammatory tendon and joint diseases. We would also like to inform you about our rules and procedures.

### **The procedure:**

Soft X-rays are used to treat pain. This procedure has been used in Germany for over 100 years. The appropriate radiation quality is determined by a medical specialist in radiation therapy with the assistance of a medical technician. Depending on the disease, 5-12 sessions, 2-3 times a week are necessary. The single radiation session lasts only a few minutes. If there are still residual symptoms after 12 weeks, the treatment can be repeated several times.

### **The operating principle:**

The effect of the X-rays is comparable to the effect of pain medication. Both therapies, among other things, reduce messenger substances that are controlling the inflammatory cells. Regions with little blood flow, such as the joints or tendons, however, can only receive very little active ingredients of pain medication. This explains the often restricted effect of pain medication. The X-ray beam, however, penetrates the painful region from the outside and can help where medication will not work due to small blood flow. Radiotherapy of inflammatory and degenerative diseases is a low-risk treatment with a high success rate in terms of pain relief. In contrast to the use of ultra-hard rays in cancer therapy, X-ray therapy does not destroy cell tissue. During radiation therapy, there may initially be a short-term decrease in symptoms, this is mainly due to the better blood circulation and the removal of metabolic products. After that, the possibly the symptoms can increase again to the initial level. A worsening of your symptoms is not to be expected as a result of the pain therapy. Please note that the actual anti-inflammatory effect with a long-term relief of symptoms usually sets in after 6 to 12 weeks.

### **The radiation procedure:**

We irradiate benign diseases with soft X-rays and very low radiation doses. Although the exposure to so-called "scattered radiation" is extremely low, we protect your radiation-sensitive organs with lead aprons. The radiation exposure, which e.g the radiation of the shoulder joint (1.2-2.0 mSv) is comparable to approx. 15 transatlantic flights (a 0.1 mSv), or 6 months of living in the Rhein-Main area (2.4 mSv). Triggering cancer with such a diminutive dose of radiation is very improbable and has not been observed in the decade long use of X-rays for pain relief (since ca. 1910).



### **The first consultation:**

For the first consultation, please bring an FFP 2 mask, the medical letter of referral (issued to radiation therapy), current X-rays and written findings. During the registration, we will arrange the radiation appointments with you with a fixed timeframe of 30 minutes (the same for all dates) during which you can come to us.

After the physical examination and the pre-treatment consultation with your doctor, the radiation field will be marked, photographed and documented in your patient file. Your data is properly stored and protected against unauthorized access. The patient information on data protection in accordance with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is available at the registration.

### **The radiation procedure:**

Our regulations to avoid COVID-19 is clear: only enter the practice with a FFP-2 mask and only WITHIN your timeframe of 30 minutes!

If you are too early, please wait outside the practice until your timeframe begins.

The radiation treatments only last a few minutes and is carried out 2-3 times a week. Our waiting room can accommodate 6 patients who can come freely within the 30-minute timeframe.

We don't call you up. Please pay attention to who came before and after you. When a changing room in the waiting area is free, please enter without being asked.

Undress only the radiation field and put on the lead apron on yourself. From here you will be taken to the radiation room.

Out of respect for the professionals treating you, we would like to ask you to wear clean clothing and observe proper personal hygiene.

### **The aftercare:**

If there are still residual symptoms 3 months after the completion of the radiation treatment, a further radiation sequence can be carried out. Please call during our office hours for a new appointment: Tel.: 069-175 36 883.

Please also remember to bring a new medical letter of referral (issued to radiation therapy) from your referring general practitioner or specialist.

### **Summary:**

Radiation therapy for inflammatory and degenerative diseases is a low-risk treatment with a high success rate for pain relief. Acute or chronic side effects are not to be expected. It is very unlikely that cancer is triggered by the very low dose of radiation and has not been observed at these low doses.

You have further questions? We are happy to answer all your questions in our medical consultation.