



RESEARCH TODAY

TheraSphere

*Offers Alternative Treatment for
Inoperable Liver Cancer*

By Karen Keeler Rogers

Patients who have limited treatment options for inoperable primary or metastatic liver cancer may benefit from a clinical trial using a device called TheraSphere® that delivers radiation directly to liver tumors through the blood vessels that feed them. This local, highly targeted radiation may have fewer side effects than systemic therapies such as chemotherapy. It also enables doctors to treat liver tumors with higher amounts of radiation than would otherwise be possible.

Cancer Treatment Centers of America® (CTCA) is taking part in national clinical trials with TheraSphere at each of its four regional medical centers. TheraSphere is composed of tiny, radioactive glass beads that deliver Yttrium-90, a radioactive material, directly to the tumor. Because of its targeted nature, TheraSphere may reduce radiation damage to healthy tissues.

TheraSphere radioactive beads are infused through a flexible catheter inserted

into the patient's femoral artery and, from there, into the hepatic artery that feeds the tumor. After infusion, TheraSphere beads emit radiation at the site of the tumor for up to several weeks. TheraSphere treatment is an outpatient therapy, and the majority of patients do not require hospitalization. Common side effects include mild to moderate fatigue, pain, and nausea for about a week. Physicians describe these symptoms as similar to those of the flu.

The CTCA phase I and II clinical trials provide patients with access to TheraSphere therapy, while data from the trials are used to evaluate patient response to TheraSphere and its effect on their survival and overall well-being. Patients who have received TheraSphere can also be treated with other, more conventional liver cancer therapies.

According to CTCA principal investigator James P. Flynn, MD, FACR, clinical trials at CTCA and other US medi-

cal institutions suggest that TheraSphere treatment can shrink liver tumors, which in turn can lessen patients' pain and discomfort from the disease and increase their quality of life.

TheraSphere is currently approved for use as a humanitarian use device in the United States by the US Food and Drug Administration and has been approved in Canada for the treatment of liver cancer. To date, 151 liver cancer patients have received TheraSphere in clinical trials at CTCA, which continues to accept qualified patients. [cfThrive](#)

For more information about TheraSphere, including details about rare or more-severe side effects, please ask your doctor or refer to the TheraSphere package insert at therasphere.com.