

Radiotherapy

for Dupuytren's
contracture and
Ledderhose disease



The
Dupuytren's
Practice

The Dupuytren's Practice offers radiotherapy for Dupuytren's contracture, Ledderhose disease and other benign (non-cancerous) diseases. As a business of GenesisCare (Genesis Cancer Care UK Limited), we have access to world-class expertise and can offer the latest technology and treatments that have been proven to make a difference.

Low-dose radiotherapy is a safe, effective and non-invasive treatment for early-stage Dupuytren's contracture and Ledderhose disease. For most patients, it can provide pain relief and prevent the progression of disease.

Whether you have private medical insurance or are a self-funding patient, you can be seen and treated quickly. Our state-of-the-art private clinics include the latest radiotherapy equipment and are staffed by highly experienced healthcare professionals with expert knowledge of these diseases.

**Low-dose radiotherapy
can provide pain relief and
prevent the progression
of Dupuytren's contracture
and Ledderhose disease**



**“Radiotherapy
can reduce pain
and the need
for surgical
intervention
for benign
conditions”**

Dr Richard Shaffer, The Dupuytren's Practice

What is Dupuytren's contracture?

Dupuytren's contracture is a benign (non-cancerous) condition that affects the connective tissue in the palm of your hand and fingers. It typically starts as one or more small lumps in your hand. These lumps grow and cords develop along the tendons of your fingers. If left untreated, they can cause your fingers to bend towards your palm until they're no longer able to straighten – this is called a contracture. This can restrict your movement and ability to perform everyday tasks.



What is Ledderhose disease?

Ledderhose disease is just like Dupuytren's contracture, except it affects the connective tissue in your feet. It results in lumps in the arch of your foot that, if left untreated, can become tender and painful, especially when standing or walking.

Why radiotherapy?

For Dupuytren's contracture, radiotherapy treatment reduces the risk of the disease progressing and the need for invasive surgery by more than three times. For Ledderhose disease, radiotherapy reduces pain and improves mobility in four out of five patients.

Treatment is non-invasive, causing minimal disruption to your daily life, allowing you to get on with what's important to you.

How does radiotherapy work?

Radiotherapy is a non-invasive treatment using precisely targeted X-rays to treat diseased tissues in the body. While high-dose radiotherapy is often used to treat cancers, low-dose radiotherapy is used for benign (non-cancerous) conditions.

The radiation is directed at the nodules (lumps) in your hands or feet and alters the development and growth rate of the cells that make up these nodules. This causes the nodules to soften and shrink, and prevents the formation of contractures – permanent tightening of the connective tissues.

Radiotherapy also has an anti-inflammatory effect and reduces inflammation around the nodules and cords, reducing pain in the affected area.

Is it for me?

Radiotherapy is an effective treatment option for early-stage Dupuytren's contracture, when there is minimal to no contracture of your fingers, and if your symptoms have worsened over the last 12 months. If your contracture is at an angle significantly greater than 10 degrees, radiotherapy is less likely to be the best treatment for you so your doctor may recommend alternative options.

For Ledderhose disease, radiotherapy is effective at any stage – many people find improvements in their nodules, increased function and reduced pain after treatment.

Side effects

You may experience some minor side effects after radiotherapy treatment. Your personal risk will be discussed with you during your initial consultation with The Dupuytren's Practice team.

During your treatment, you shouldn't experience any pain, drowsiness or dizziness.

Short-term side effects

Two to three weeks after the end of your radiotherapy course, the skin on your palm or sole may become a little red, sore or dry. This tends to be very minor, although about 1 in 100 people can get swelling or weeping around the area. Most people find putting some moisturiser around the treatment site is enough to treat the dryness.

Long-term side effects

Around one in five people find that the dryness continues in the long term. Some people notice minor changes in the skin and it may become thicker, thinner, rougher, or smoother than before the treatment.

While there is a theoretical risk of developing a cancer in the skin around the treated area, the risk is very small – in the region of 0.01% to 0.1% (between 1 in 10,000 patients and 1 in 1,000 patients). The radiation is precisely targeted at the lumps to avoid unnecessary exposure to the rest of your body or other areas of your hand or foot. It's also important to note that the radiation dose is much lower than radiotherapy treatment for cancer.

If you have any concerns during your treatment, your radiographer will be available to answer your questions at any time.

What does treatment involve?

Here is an outline of what to expect at your initial appointment, during and after your treatment. There are four stages to the process: your initial consultation, planning, treatment and follow-up. Before your first appointment your care team will call you to explain any preparation instructions in advance of your appointment and to answer any questions.



Your initial consultation

1. Your consultant will ask questions, perform an examination and discuss treatment options with you, including benefits and possible side effects
2. If it's agreed that radiotherapy is right for your condition, you'll need to sign a consent form for your treatment
3. Your consultant will then outline the nodules and cords which are to be treated
4. A safety margin will be marked around the tissue to be treated – this allows us to treat the affected area while protecting the unaffected part of your hand or foot
5. A radiographer will then take a photograph of the area and make a tracing so that the area can accurately be treated each day
6. After this has been done, you can go home – your treatment will generally start at least a few days later

Treatment

1. You'll be asked to position yourself underneath the radiotherapy machine, with the hand or foot placed on a positioning bag for the duration of your treatment session
2. Each appointment will take around 10 minutes each day, with the radiotherapy treatment itself taking just under a minute to complete
3. You can leave straight away when each session is complete. Your treatment will be administered over five consecutive days (excluding weekends) and then repeated after a break of around three months
4. The radiotherapy will be targeted to the same area throughout your course of treatment, even if the nodules in the hand or foot seem to be decreasing in size. This is to limit the likelihood of recurrence after treatment

Follow-up

You'll receive a follow-up call from us to check how you are doing after your treatment. Here you can discuss any problems, side effects or questions you may have.

Three months after your treatment, you'll be sent a questionnaire by your consultant so we can assess how your hands or feet are. If necessary, you'll be able to have an additional consultation over the phone, or at one of our clinics, to discuss your outcomes in more detail.



Why choose the Dupuytren's Practice?

As a business of GenesisCare, a specialist provider of advanced radiotherapy, our clinicians have extensive experience treating patients with benign conditions. There's no need to wait – you can book a consultation and be treated quickly. And with specialist outpatient centres at convenient destinations across the UK, you won't have to travel far for treatment.

Paying for your radiotherapy treatment

Your treatment at The Dupuytren's Practice can be funded by most private medical insurance providers including Bupa, Vitality and WPA. Other private medical insurance providers may fund your treatment on a case-by-case basis.

All our services are available for patients who are looking to self-pay too. We accept a variety of payment methods and will provide you with a detailed quote for your treatment. If you would like an estimate of the costs for your care, please make an enquiry.



How to access radiotherapy treatment

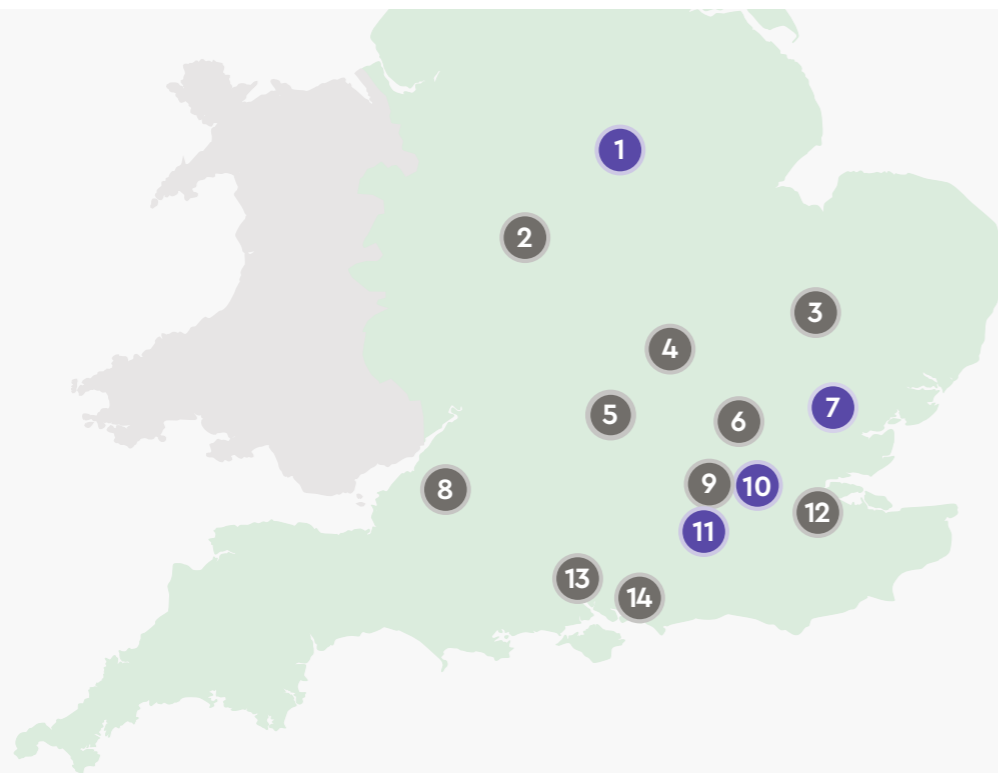
We offer our advanced radiotherapy service to patients across the UK, within any of 14 specialist GenesisCare treatment centres.

Initial consultations with Dr Shaffer and Dr Algrafi are held weekly in Guildford, London and Chelmsford, and every two months in Nottingham. After which your treatment can be offered at a time and place to suit you.

We aim to ensure that patients can fit their treatments around their lifestyle, and, where possible, appointments will be made at a time convenient to them.

To find out if you could benefit from radiotherapy treatment, book an appointment with our expert team.

Benign@genesiscare.co.uk | 0808 1565 900



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