



GUIDE TO MESOTHELIOMA TREATMENTS

Your Consultant will **advise** you of a number of **treatment options** available to you once **diagnosed** with **Mesothelioma**. The **best treatment** for you will **depend** upon many factors such as:

- age
- progression of the disease
- your general health, and
- your feelings on the best treatment for you

You should **discuss** each **option** fully with your treating **Consultant** before making a **decision**.

3 treatment options exist for mesothelioma patients:

- Surgery
- Chemotherapy
- Radiotherapy



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Surgery

Type of Approach	Procedure Involved	Advantages	Disadvantages
Pleurectomy (dicortication)	Involves removing the lining of the lung	Quicker recovery time; Useful for those patients whose health would prevent them from undergoing the other available surgical procedure	Increased risk of recurrence of the disease as procedure is unable to remove all traces of the disease
Extrapleural Pneumonectomy	Involves removing the entire affected lung, the pleura (lining of the lung), the pericardium surrounding the heart and the diaphragm. The hospital will only offer this treatment to patients who demonstrate good heart and lung function	Aims at removing a larger proportion of the disease during surgery	Very radical procedure and more risks involved; Longer recovery time following surgery

Chemotherapy

Chemotherapy treatment uses **anti-cancer drugs**, usually injected into the bloodstream. These drugs act to **prevent** the **cancer cells** from **multiplying**. Typically, to increase the effectiveness they will use a combination of drugs. Depending on the type of drugs used to treat you, treatment times can vary from, every week or every 2 or 3 weeks.

Chemotherapy treatment **slows down** the **growth** and **spread** of the disease and acts to **control symptoms**. The most common drugs used include Gemcitabine (Gemzar), Carboplatin (Paraplatin) and Cisplatin (Platinol). Recently, a new anti-cancer drug called Pemetrexed Disodium or Alimta has proven effective in controlling symptoms as well as extending the survival time of mesothelioma patients by, on average, one third.

Radiotherapy

Radiotherapy treatment is sometimes used to **slow down growth** and **spread** of the cancer and also to **control the symptoms** of the disease. It

involves using **high energy x-rays** to **kill cancer cells** and **shrink tumours**. Radiotherapy has recently proven **effective** in **preventing seeding** which can cause **recurrence** of the tumour, at biopsy and chest fluid drainage sites of the patient.

Treatment Study

A recent study using a three-fold approach to treating mesothelioma has been deemed effective. By combining Pleurectomy, Chemotherapy and Radiotherapy treatments the study's results have demonstrated positive survival results and morbidity and warrants additional testing.

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