



**[cancer.org](http://cancer.org) | 1.800.227.2345**

---

put into the tumor. The treatment (such as a high energy current) is passed through the needle to destroy the cancer cells.

[Radiation therapy](#)<sup>2</sup> may also be an option for treating liver metastases. This may involve radiation to the whole liver. Or if there are a small number of metastases, a specialized procedure called [stereotactic radiosurgery](#)<sup>3</sup> may be used.

Chemotherapy may be used for certain kinds of cancer. This may be given into a vein in your arm or right into a blood vessel leading to the liver.

Sometimes a procedure can be done to block the blood supply to the cancer. This is called [embolization](#)<sup>4</sup>.

If a person has hepatic encephalopathy, treatment will depend on how severe symptoms are. A person who is confused, sleepy, or in a coma will likely be treated with medicines such as lactulose, lactitol, or rifaximin. These medicines decrease the level of one of the toxins (ammonia) that can build up in the blood.

## Hyperlinks

1. [www.cancer.org/cancer/liver-cancer/treating/tumor-ablation.html](http://www.cancer.org/cancer/liver-cancer/treating/tumor-ablation.html)
2. [www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/treatment-types/radiation.html](http://www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/treatment-types/radiation.html)
3. [www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/treatment-types/radiation/external-beam-radiation-therapy.html](http://www.cancer.org/treatment/treatments-and-side-effects/treatment-types/radiation/external-beam-radiation-therapy.html)
4. [www.cancer.org/cancer/liver-cancer/treating/embolization-therapy.html](http://www.cancer.org/cancer/liver-cancer/treating/embolization-therapy.html)

## References

Cho CS, Lubner S & Owen D. Metastatic cancer to the liver. In: DeVita VT, Lawrence TS, Rosenberg SA, eds. DeVita, Hellman, and Rosenberg's Cancer: Principles & Practice of Oncology. 11th ed. Philadelphia, Pa: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins; 2019: 1957-1969.

Ferenci P. Hepatic encephalopathy in adults: Treatment. [www.uptodate.com](http://www.uptodate.com). Updated June 9, 2020. Accessed August 14, 2020.

Last Revised: September 10, 2020

**Written by**

The American Cancer Society medical and editorial content team  
([www.cancer.org/cancer/acs-medical-content-and-news-staff.html](http://www.cancer.org/cancer/acs-medical-content-and-news-staff.html))

Our team is made up of doctors and oncology certified nurses with deep knowledge of cancer care as well as journalists, editors, and translators with extensive experience in medical writing.

American Cancer Society medical information is copyrighted material. For reprint requests, please see our Content Usage Policy ([www.cancer.org/about-us/policies/content-usage.html](http://www.cancer.org/about-us/policies/content-usage.html)).

**cancer.org | 1.800.227.2345**