



## INAHTA Briefs

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<b>Issue:</b>	Should VA offer stereotactic radiosurgery to veterans for the treatment of metastases to the brain?
<b>Title:</b>	Stereotactic Radiosurgery for Metastases to the Brain: A Systematic Review of Effectiveness
<b>Agency:</b>	VA Technology Assessment Program, Office of Patient Care Services, Room D4-142, 150 S. Huntington Ave (11-T), Boston, MA 02130 Tel: 857-364-4469 Fax: 857-364-6587
<b>Reference:</b>	VA Technology Assessment Program Report December, 1997. <a href="http://www.va.gov/vatap">www.va.gov/vatap</a>
<b>Aim:</b>	To evaluate the effectiveness of stereotactic radiosurgery for the treatment of metastases to the brain.
<b>Conclusions and results:</b>	The available data from case series suggest that stereotactic radiosurgery is a relatively safe and effective technology for definitive treatment of brain metastases in selected patients. Stereotactic radiosurgery provides greater survival benefits than traditional whole brain radiotherapy. Stereotactic radiosurgery may be comparable to surgery plus radiation therapy for the treatment of patients with smaller solitary metastases. Stereotactic radiosurgery can be used to treat patients whose metastases recur after traditional therapies are used. The patients that benefit most from stereotactic radiosurgery are highly functional patients with well-controlled systemic cancers.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	The current evidence is insufficient to make any definite conclusions about the effectiveness of stereotactic radiosurgery compared to the standard treatment for brain metastases. No conclusions regarding optimal equipment selection, treatment parameters or patient selection criteria can be made at this time.
<b>Methods:</b>	Comprehensive literature searches were conducted using Medline, Premedline, Health Planning and Administration, HealthStar, Embase and Current Contents from 1991 thru 1997. Search strategies used the terms radiosurgery or stereotactic radiosurgery combined with brain neoplasm, controlled clinical trials, meta-analysis, multi-center studies or practice guidelines. The searches yielded 748 references of which 90 were deemed to be relevant and their full text was reviewed. Thirteen case series met inclusion criteria and were included in this report.
<b>Further research/reviews required:</b>	Additional research is needed to determine the true effectiveness of stereotactic radiosurgery for the use in patients with metastatic brain cancer. Randomized clinical trials are currently underway.
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