



**University  
Hospitals Sussex**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Tumour recurrence: should I have surgery?

Neuro Oncology

Patient information

## What is this information about?

Many brain tumours grow back even after successful surgery and oncological treatments. When a cancer comes back it is called recurrence. A recurrence can happen shortly after the original cancer is treated, or several years after treatment has been completed.

If you are diagnosed with a recurrent tumour, you may feel like you are starting from square one all over again. You will need to think about how additional treatment can:

- impact on your quality of life
- impact on your survival.

Your team will have explained the likelihood of your tumour returning when you were first diagnosed but it can be a real shock to find out that your tumour has returned.

Another operation to attempt to remove some of the tumour may be possible. Your surgeon and oncologist will discuss this with you. They will also discuss any alternative treatments including chemotherapy and any clinical trials that may be available.

This information is to help you make the decision about whether to go ahead with further surgery or not.

Please contact your nurse specialist if you need any further information.

# Frequently asked questions

<b>Frequently asked questions</b>	<b>In favour of surgery</b>	<b>Not in favour of surgery</b>
<b>Is surgery best for my long-term survival?</b>	If surgery goes well, it is likely, but not guaranteed to extend your survival.	The impact on your survival may not be large.
<b>Will it help me feel better?</b>	If you have 'pressure' symptoms caused by the tumour, these may improve.	If you have no symptoms then surgery will not make you feel any better.
<b>Will this stop my tumour growing back again in the future?</b>	It is highly unlikely but it may delay it for a time.	The tumour will almost certainly continue to grow.
<b>Are the risks the same or greater with a 2nd operation?</b>	They are higher but your surgeon will explain the increased risks versus the benefits of having further tumour removed.	After the operation, you could struggle with complications such as a stroke, infection, or other life-changing problems.
<b>Will you use the same scar?</b>	Your surgeon will explain how they will approach your second operation. It is very likely that they will use the same scar but it may be extended.	The scar will take longer to heal after a second operation.

<p><b>Will I be in hospital for the same number of days?</b></p>	<p>It is possible that you will need to stay in hospital for a few days more after a second operation.</p>	<p>A longer stay in hospital means less time at home with your family.</p>
<p><b>Will it take longer to recover once I get home?</b></p>	<p>It is common for people to take longer to recover from a second operation. However, your symptoms may get much better and improve your quality of life.</p>	<p>Fatigue (tiredness) following surgery could significantly impact on your quality of life, affecting how much you can do day to day.</p>
<p><b>If I decide to go ahead, can I have further surgery again in the future?</b></p>	<p>Occasionally people have had a 3rd and even a 4th operation. But this is unlikely.</p>	<p>Due to the impact of the tumour, it is probable that you will be affected by worsening symptoms and further surgery is unlikely.</p>
<p><b>If I decide to go ahead, will I be offered further chemo/ radiotherapy in the future?</b></p>	<p>Usually, radiotherapy is only given once.</p>	
<p><b>Chemotherapy or clinical trial options will be discussed after your surgery.</b></p>	<p>Due to the impact of the tumour, effects of surgery and worsening symptoms, further chemotherapy is unlikely.</p>	

# What matters most to you?

Your personal feelings are just as important as the clinical facts. Think about what matters most to you and show how you feel about the following statements:

Option	How do I rate this option?				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I would like surgery if it gives me the chance of a longer life.					
I would like the best quality of life in the time that I have left.					
I want to spend as little time in hospital as possible.					
I do not want to have to cope with the risks of further surgery for what might be only slightly longer life expectancy.					
I do not want the surgery to affect my life in general.					
I do not want the risks of surgery to impact on my family.					

# Notes

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Brighton & Hove or Haywards Heath

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