Discharge Information and Instructions
After Gamma Knife Stereotactic Radiosurgery

What you may expect after Gamma Knife Radiosurgery:

- Some swelling and/or bruising around the pin sites is common. Sometimes there is swelling around the eyes. This will usually resolve within a few days after the procedure. You may apply a cool compress to the swollen area.

- Patients occasionally experience headaches after the stereotactic frame is removed. The headaches should lessen within a day or so after Gamma Knife treatment.

- Some patients find they tire easily for a few days after the procedure. While everyone reacts differently, most people feel back to normal within a few days after Gamma Knife treatment.

- Some patients have numbness around the pin sites or on the top of the head that persists for up to a day or two after treatment.

Care of the pin Sites:

- Band-Aids will be placed on the front pin sites after the frame is removed.

- Wait 24 hours before showering or getting the pin sites wet. Avoid hairspray, mousse, gels, hair color, permanents, or anything which may cause irritation until the pin sites have completely healed.

- You can expect the pin sites to heal in 7-10 days.

When to call for help:

- If you have severe or increasing headaches or nausea.

- If you have increasing weakness, changes in vision or changes in sensation (other than numbness around the pin sites or on the top of the head).

- If you have excessive sleepiness.

- Symptoms will vary depending on what part of the brain is being affected, so call if you experience any symptoms that are out of the ordinary for you.

- If you have signs of infection such as: redness, swelling, drainage, irritation at the pin sites, or fever of 100 degrees F for 24 hours or longer within two weeks of treatment.

- If you have any problems or concerns not answered here.
Whom and where to call:

If you have questions about medications ordered by your neurosurgeon or radiation oncologist, or new or persisting symptoms possibly related to your Gamma Knife procedure, you may call your neurosurgeon’s office directly at (415) 353-7500. Someone will answer at this number 24 hours a day. If you have non-urgent questions related to Gamma Knife, please call the Gamma Knife nurse’s voicemail at (415) 353-9325. A Gamma Knife nurse will check the voicemails once or twice a day, Monday through Friday.

Activity and rest:

You may resume your normal activities unless your doctor has instructed you otherwise. Guide your activity by your progress and how you feel. If you feel tired or have a headache, stop and rest.

Medications:

You can resume your routine medication schedule after you are discharged. If you are taking anticonvulsants or steroids, discuss with the Gamma Knife physician who should monitor and refill this medication for you. The blood level of some anticonvulsant medications need to be checked periodically. Make sure that you take your medications as directed and refill your prescription before the supply is gone.

Follow-up scans:

Depending on your diagnosis, you may need to follow-up MRI (magnetic resonance imaging). It can be done at UCSF or in your local area. A CD of the MRI images should be sent first class or priority mail to:

Gamma Knife Coordinator
Neurosurgery
UCSF Medical Center
400 Parnassus, 8th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94143

Follow-up MRI: ________________________________

Follow-up Appointment: ________________________________

Additional Medications Ordered: ________________________________

Signature: ____________________________________