



#### Oncology

Dr. Tracy LaDue, DACVIM, DACVR  
Dr. Zachary Neumann, DACVIM, MS  
Dr. Samantha Haas, DVM, MS  
Dr. Kristina Miller, DACVIM, MS

#### Internal Medicine

Dr. Abigail Walls, DACVIM  
Dr. Krysta Deitz, DACVIM, MS

## Welcome to Southeast Veterinary Oncology and Internal Medicine (SEVO-Med)!

Here at SEVO-Med, we are committed to providing you and your pet with the highest standard of care through your pet's diagnosis and treatment. We understand that your pet's illness can be frightening and confusing for all members of the family. Our team will help guide you through your pet's illness by ensuring state-of-the-art medical care options as well as excellence in client service and patient care. If you have any questions or concerns during of this process, please let us know. We strive to exceed your expectations and are honored you chose us.

Sincerely,

**Tracy LaDue, DVM (Orange Park)**

Diplomate, ACVIM (Oncology)  
Diplomate, ACVR (Radiation Oncology)

**Kristina Miller DVM, MS (Orange Park)**

Diplomate, ACVIM (Oncology)

**Zachary Neumann, DVM, MS (Jacksonville)**

Diplomate, ACVIM (Oncology)

**Samantha Haas, DVM, MS (Orange Park & Jacksonville)**

MS, Diplomate ACVIM (Oncology)

**Krysta Deitz, DVM, MS (Jacksonville)**

Diplomate, ACVIM (Internal Medicine)

**Abigail Walls, VMD (Orange Park)**

Diplomate, ACVIM (Internal Medicine)



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### In the Event of an Emergency

**In the event your pet experiences an emergency**, please contact your local emergency hospital in your area or your local vet during their appropriate business hours for assistance. If you are local to this area we advise visiting First Coast Veterinary Emergency (904-853-6310) located at: 301 Jacksonville Drive, Jacksonville Beach, FL, 32250.

**If your pet requires overnight hospitalization, the following information will be helpful.** Southeast Veterinary Oncology and Internal Medicine (SEVO-Med) hospitalizes critical care and overnight patients at First Coast Veterinary Emergency (904-853-6310). While your pet is hospitalized at First Coast Veterinary Emergency he/she will be monitored by an emergency doctor who has direct contact with your SEVO-Med specialist. When your pet is hospitalized, please understand that the emergency clinic provides care to very critical patients. Visits must be kept to a minimum. If you would like to visit your pet during their hospital stay, please call ahead to schedule an appropriate time. It is both SEVO-Med and First Coast Veterinary Emergency's intent to provide your pet with the best medical care possible. If you have any questions please feel free to ask.



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Dear Client,

Welcome to Southeast Veterinary Oncology & Internal Medicine! We pride ourselves on personalized, informative, and compassionate care. Our goal is to provide you with the information to our most frequently asked questions and our policies.

All patients are seen by appointment only, and all appointments must be made with our Client Care Coordinators. Your appointment may be made over the phone or in person. **PLEASE** call if you are running late as our schedules are made to ensure that all patients receive the proper time and attention. In the event you need to change or cancel an appointment, a notice of 24 hours is appreciated.

A SEVO-Med staff member is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for medical emergencies. Our doctors are "on call" and will be paged for emergencies. All non-emergency calls will be returned by the end of the following business day.

Estimates for recommended procedures, diagnostic testing or suggested therapy are given to every client and is reviewed with you **before** treatment. You will be asked to sign the estimate and a copy will be given to you for your records. Changes may need to be made to your pet's treatment or hospitalization plan. If the amount exceeds 25% of your original estimate, we will revise your estimate and again ask for your approval before we proceed.

At the end of your appointment, you will be given a discharge summary. The discharge summary will include: doctor's findings, results and individualized recommendations for treatment and care for your pet, and medications dispensed or recommended. Your regular veterinarian will receive a fax or email of your summary within 24 hours.

If you need medication refills before your next visit, please allow 24 hours. Some medications may be shipped to your home for a postage fee.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact myself or a Client Care Coordinator. If you ever feel you are not getting the service you deserve, please do not hesitate to email [cchandler@sevomed.com](mailto:cchandler@sevomed.com) or call and speak with me directly at (904)278-3870.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Chandler  
Hospital Director

304 Corporate Way  
Orange Park, FL 32073  
(904) 278-3870

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14333-42 Beach Blvd  
Jacksonville, Florida 32250  
(904) 567-7519



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## OUR PHILOSOPHY

The team at Southeast Veterinary Oncology and Internal Medicine is committed to providing you and your pet with the highest standards of excellence in veterinary specialty medicine. We at SEVO-Med understand the unique and special bond shared between you and your pet. SEVO-Med combines cutting-edge treatments with compassionate, individualized care during your pet's journey through a serious illness or cancer diagnosis. We believe in collaboration between you, your family veterinarian, and our team of specialists to develop the best treatment plan for your pet. We will guide you in making the best decision for your furry family member by offering a wide variety of treatment options to provide an excellent quality of life both during and after treatment. Let us hold your hands (and paws) as we travel this path together.



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## **Client Care Coordinator Mission Statement**

It is the Client Care Coordinators' goal at Southeast Veterinary Oncology and Internal Medicine (SEVO-Med) to provide our clients with the highest standard in client service and care. We strive to ensure that every interaction a client has with our staff is pleasurable, informative, and above all, the best it can possibly be. We understand that our clients are unique people in the sense that they seek out the most state-of-the-art medical care for their pets and consider them members of the family. We, in turn, intend to provide you with a service that is equally unique by tailoring to your individual needs. With our expert communication skills and sincerest compassion we hope to help your family through this experience. We intend to make a lasting impression that shows how much we really do care about you and your pet.



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## **SEVO CLIENT INFORMATION SERIES**

### **Topic: Chemotherapy**

#### **WHAT IS CHEMOTHERAPY?**

The use of a drug or chemical to treat any illness is chemotherapy, but this term commonly refers to the use of drugs in the treatment of cancer. The goal of chemotherapy in companion animals is either to increase the life span or to improve the quality of life for the animal with cancer.

#### **HOW DOES CHEMOTHRAPY WORK?**

Cancer can be defined as a rapid, uncontrolled growth of cells. Anticancer drugs work by blocking cell growth and division. Different drugs interfere with different steps in these processes. In many cases, a combination of drugs is the most effective way to kill the cancer cells.

#### **HOW IS CHEMOTHERAPY GIVEN?**

Most anticancer drugs are given by mouth or by injection. The route chosen depends on the type of drug and the type of cancer.

#### **HOW LONG WILL MY PET RECEIVE CHEMOTHERAPY?**

The length of time and frequency of drug administration depend on the kind of cancer being treated and how well the therapy is tolerated by the patient. Treatment may be given daily, weekly, or monthly.

#### **AM I AT RISK OF EXPOSURE TO THESE DRUGS?**

Yes. Most anticancer drugs are very potent and must be handled with care. Some are “carcinogens” and can cause cancer with prolonged exposure. With orally administered drugs, it is important that the pills or capsules are kept out of reach of children in childproof containers. When handling these drugs, the owner should wear latex or polyvinyl gloves to avoid unnecessary exposure. With oral and injectable drugs, the urine and feces of the animal may be contaminated with active drug compounds for several days after administration. Always avoid contact with the urine and feces of animals receiving chemotherapy. Wear latex or polyvinyl gloves to clean up accidents or the litter box. Rinse exposed surfaces well.



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## **WILL MY PET EXPERIENCE SIDE EFFECTS?**

Maybe. Veterinarians try to choose drug doses and combinations that cause the fewest side effects. Ideally, the animal receiving chemotherapy does not even realize that he or she is ill. However the drugs used in chemotherapy are extremely potent and side effects can occur. The potential for side effects must be balanced against the benefits of the chemotherapy and the side effects of the cancer if left untreated. Choosing chemotherapy for your pet is an individual decision.

## **WHAT KIND OF SIDE EFFECTS OCCUR?**

Side effects arise because the normal cells in the body are also exposed to the anticancer drug. The most sensitive normal cells are found in the blood, gastrointestinal tract, skin, and reproductive system. Consequently, potential side effects include infection, bleeding, decreased appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, thin hair coat or skin color changes, and sterility. Rare side effects associated with specific drugs include bladder discomfort, kidney damage, and heart failure. The most serious side effect is overwhelming infection leading to death.

## **WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON SIDE EFFECTS?**

The most common side effect reported by owners is that the pet seems to be “off” for a day or two. This might mean that the pet has slightly less energy or seems less excited than normal about eating. Less commonly, the pet may skip a meal or two, have one episode of vomiting or diarrhea, or seem lethargic. Unfortunately, there is no way to predict which pet will develop the most serious reactions. The animal receiving chemotherapy needs to be watched closely and taken to his or her veterinarian at the first sign of illness.



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## PetCure Oncology at Sevo-Med



## RADIATION THERAPY Frequently Asked Questions

Our clinic hours are from 7:30AM – 5:30PM Monday – Friday; In the case of an emergency in the evenings or weekends, we have a doctor on call 24/7. Call our main line 904-278-3870 and choose option #2 to reach the doctor on call.

### HOW DOES RADIATION THERAPY WORK?

Radiation therapy is a treatment that utilizes high energy ions, particles, and free radicals to damage a cell's DNA and ultimately leads to its death. This type of therapy works primarily by disrupting the normal reproductive cycle of cells. The goal of this type of treatment is to alter the cycle of cancer cells, while maintaining the normal reproductive cycle of the surrounding healthy cells. Many tumors can be treated definitively, with the intent of leading to a cure or a lengthy remission time. There are many instances, however, where the main intent of radiation therapy is to improve the overall quality of life for our pets. This type of treatment, called palliation, can provide much needed pain relief.

### WHAT TYPE OF CANCER DOES RADIATION THERAPY TREAT?

Radiation therapy has been shown to be effective at treating many types of tumors. These include, *but are certainly not limited to:*

- **Cutaneous tumors:** mast cell tumors, soft tissue sarcomas, squamous cell carcinomas, basal cell carcinomas, perianal gland tumors, sweat gland carcinomas
- **Nasal tumors:** adenocarcinomas, sarcomas, lymphomas
- **Brain tumors:** Glial tumors (astrocytomas, gliomas, oligodendrogliomas), pituitary tumors, meningiomas
- **Oral tumors:** ameloblastomas, sarcomas (chondrosarcomas, fibrosarcomas), melanomas
- **Pelvic tumors:** prostate tumors, anal sac adenocarcinomas
- **Bone tumors:** osteosarcomas





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## WHAT IS A SIMULATION?

The simulation is your first appointment at which time we will discuss with you all necessary information concerning treatment, scheduling, and anesthesia/sedation. At this time, the Medical Oncologist will perform a physical examination and the radiation therapist will take several pictures and measurements of the intended treatment site. A special planning CT scan will be performed for every patient. For these cases, custom immobilization devices will be created to ensure optimal position reproducibility for the ensuing radiation treatments. Treatment can often begin approximately one week following this appointment, as planning is performed by an off-site radiation oncologist. A lot of information will be discussed at this first meeting and you should not hesitate to voice any questions or concerns at any time during treatment.

## HOW IS THE TREATMENT ADMINISTERED?

Treatments are delivered using our state-of-the-art Varian Clinac ix Rapid Arc high-performance linear accelerator (see picture on front cover). Our linear accelerator is fully equipped with an integrated multi-leaf collimator system (MLC), an electronic portal imaging system, and remote treatment couch control. The Varian Clinac ix Rapid Arc model is the treatment unit of choice in cancer centers throughout the world and it enables us to deliver a range of treatment protocols, from Intensity-Modulated-Radiation-Therapy (IMRT) to Stereotactic Radiosurgery (SRS), as well as conventionally-fractionated photon and electron techniques. During the simulation, the radiation therapist will give you a more detailed explanation of your pet's specific treatment protocol.

## WHO IS INVOLVED WITH THE TREATMENT OF MY PET?

There are several professionals working together to provide optimal care for each and every pet that comes to our center: the medical oncologist, the radiation oncologist, the center veterinarian, the radiation therapist, and the veterinary technicians.

### **Medical Oncologist**

A medical oncologist is a veterinarian that specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer. The oncologist will discuss with you the prognosis for any given tumor treated with radiation therapy prior to treatment.

### **Radiation Oncologist**

The radiation oncologist is responsible for calculating the radiation dose and pattern that will safely treat the tumor cells while maintaining healthy surrounding tissues. Our radiation oncologist uses the Varian Eclipse treatment planning system to develop and customize the optimal treatment protocol. This is the same treatment planning system used in most major human cancer centers throughout the world. The treatment plan is the vital link between the prescription and the delivery of therapeutic radiation.

The radiation oncologist also oversees treatment and sedation or anesthesia, as required. The center veterinarian is your first line of communication should any problems or concerns arise.

### **Radiation Therapist**

The radiation therapist operates the linear accelerator and is responsible for administering the actual radiation treatment. The therapist's job is to ensure proper patient positioning and accurately deliver each patient's prescribed treatment plan.

Every radiation treatment at Southeast Veterinary Oncology and Internal Medicine is delivered by a board-certified, licensed Radiation Therapist. This standard sets us apart from most of our competition in the field of veterinary radiation therapy.

### **Veterinary Technician**

The veterinary technician is responsible for delivering sedation/anesthesia and assisting with the positioning of patients for treatment.

## HOW DO I MAKE APPOINTMENTS?

Appointments can be made as far in advance as you like throughout the treatment period with any member of our staff. In most cases, you should expect to need three appointments per week. Our Office is open Monday – Friday from 7:30am – 5:30pm. We are very flexible in scheduling and ask that you make appointments as soon as you know your availability. If at any time you need to cancel or reschedule an appointment please contact us so that we adjust the schedule accordingly. Appointment time slots are 60 minutes and will often take from 15-20 minutes if no anesthesia is required. On occasion, appointments may take up to 60 minutes to provide the most accurate therapy but this will be discussed with you prior to the appointment.



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## CAN I FEED MY PET BEFORE TREATMENTS?

It is very important that all patients receiving radiation therapy do so on an empty stomach. Although many of our patients do not require sedation/anesthesia, some patients may be feeling more anxious on any given day and require sedation. Patients undergoing anesthesia or sedation may vomit and subsequently aspirate any stomach contents. Aspiration may lead to pneumonia, a life threatening condition. For any patient receiving morning treatments, no food should be given after 12 AM the night before. It is okay to give patients breakfast if they are receiving afternoon treatments, but should not be fed anything else (including treats) throughout the day. Water may still be given up until your pet's scheduled appointment.



## CAN I CONTINUE TO GIVE OTHER MEDICATIONS TO MY PET?

It is very important that for the duration of your pet's treatment, any medication, supplement or vitamin that your pet takes be discussed with the Center Veterinarian. Most medications are fine to give during treatment; however, many vitamins contain anti-oxidant properties. One means of tumor cell destruction during radiation therapy is through the production of oxygen free radicals, the very things that anti-oxidants attempt to rid the body of. Therefore, giving anti-oxidants during treatment is actually working against the prescribed therapy.

## CAN I MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE GROOMER OR GIVE A BATH?

During treatment, it is very important that any plans to groom or bathe your pet be discussed with a member of our staff. The use of markers on the skin is a very important means of identifying the intended treatment area. These marks can be inadvertently removed during a grooming or bathing episode making identification of the area more difficult at the next scheduled treatment time. We generally state that if you wish to have your pet bathed or groomed, it is best to do before treatments begin.

## WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON SIDE EFFECTS?

Side effects in radiation therapy are cumulative and site specific. This means that side effects may not occur for several treatments and may extend a couple of weeks past the scheduled treatment dates.

Side effects are also dependent on what *type* of radiation the patient will be receiving, whether photons or electrons. This will be explained in detail by the radiation therapist at the time of consult.

The most common side effect seen is local (site specific) hair loss and skin reactions. Sensitive skin is very common during the treatment period. This may include redness, itchiness, and peeling. It is very important that if these signs are noted that your pet be kept from scratching or licking the site. The irritation of the skin can be expected to get worse with any scratching or licking.

Therefore, many of our patients will require the use of an Elizabethan collar (e-collar) once this occurs. We can also provide you with both topical and oral medications that will help in decreasing the irritation.

Hair loss is also commonly seen during and following radiation therapy. Many times the hair may grow back after several months, but it will often have a different color and texture as previously seen.

Other side effects, again, being specific to the area being treated, include a condition known as KCS (or dry eye), nasal discharge, and irritation of the gums. All of these will be discussed with you at the time of your simulation as necessary. An appointment should be made with your oncologist two weeks following the last treatment performed. At this time, your oncologist will assess the treatment site and answer any lingering questions you might have.





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## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN MY PET GOES “TO THE BACK”?

Your pet is placed on a table where they may or may not receive sedation or anesthesia. The use of anesthesia/sedation is based on several criteria; including treatment site, treatment type, patient anxiety, and length of treatment. Some patients will be placed in their own custom immobilization devices. The radiation therapy machine is set with the appropriate doses and angles to deliver the safest and most efficient radiation to your pet. The staff must then step out of the room. Two strategically placed cameras and a speaker allow for interaction with your pet while in the room. Treatment can be stopped immediately if a patient becomes too restless, in which staff will enter the room to calm the patient down. For pets receiving anesthesia, monitoring equipment such as an ECG, a ventilator, oxygen saturation, and blood pressure are utilized and monitored with the previously discussed cameras. Upon finishing the prescribed treatment, if a patient was sedated, a reversing agent is given to minimize any side effects of the sedatives. Anesthetic cases are brought to the recovery cage where they are able to rest comfortably until they are ready to go home, generally within 10-15 minutes.

## WHO SHOULD I SPEAK TO WITH ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS I MAY HAVE DURING THE TREATMENT PERIOD?

The Radiation Oncologist should be considered your first line of communication. Any questions or concerns that you may have during treatment should be directed to the Radiation Oncologist. The radiation therapist can answer any radiation-related questions, as well.

**Please do not hesitate to ask any questions before, during, or after the treatment period. It is our pleasure to serve you and provide the best medical care to your pet.**





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## Financing Options

### Care Credit

[www.carecredit.com](http://www.carecredit.com)

- 0% finance fees for 6 months
- Extended terms may be available online- APR % based on individual credit history

### Scratch Pay

[www.scratchpay.com](http://www.scratchpay.com)

- Take 5: 20% down on 1st payment & 4 payments of 20% every 2 weeks
- Pay Later: 3 monthly payments
- Pay over-time: 12/24 months rate depends on individual credit history

## Financial Assistance & Charitable Organizations for Cancer Treatment

Funding is a great tool to utilize for financial help!

Please keep in mind that funding is limited for some of the organizations listed and they are on a first come, first serve basis. If an association states they are out of funds that does not mean that they are closing, please remember that many of them provide assistance through donations. The best possibility to receive funding is to apply right away and to still apply if they are low on funding. Many organizations also have wait lists available. Please remember that as the pet owner it is your responsibility to keep track of, apply for, and supply the association with all the needed paperwork and information. Once you have applied through the appropriate channels, the association then will reach out to SEVO-Med for medical records.

Here are some of the many organizations dedicated to helping families and pets in need...

### Brown Dog Foundation

<http://www.browndogfoundation.org/>

### CorgiAid (Corgi only)

<https://corgiaid.com/funding-guidelines/eligibility/>

### Emma's Foundation for Canine Cancer

<http://www.emmasfoundationforcaninecancer.org>

### Frankie's Friends

[www.frankiesfriends.org](http://www.frankiesfriends.org)

- Max \$1000/household (family pets)
- Need clear diagnosis, specific treatment & estimate of cost from veterinarian

### Handicapped Pets Foundation

<http://hpets.org>

### Helping Harley Cancer Treatment (Working Service dogs only)

<http://landofpuregold.com/grants/>

### Joshua Louis Animal Cancer Fund (Partners with Frankie's Friends)

[www.joshualouis.org](http://www.joshualouis.org)





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- Lifesaving oncology care by a veterinary oncologist
- Funds for family-owned pets
- Treatable diagnosis with good prognosis
- NO coverage for restaging and/or emergency care due to cancer

#### **Labrador LifeLine (Purebred Labs: Radiation, Chemo, Surgery)**

[www.labradorlifeline.org](http://www.labradorlifeline.org)

- Must apply for Care Credit 1st
- Family owned, up to 75% of therapy- max \$1500
- For a dog in rescue, up to 50% max \$750
- All dogs must be spayed/neutered before funds will be released or a signed neuter agreement

#### **Live Like Roo (Biopsies & any cancer-preventative as warranted)**

[www.livelikeroo.org](http://www.livelikeroo.org)

- Cappy Fund: Dogs with cancer; Rescues and Senior dogs
- Maggie's Mission: Cats with cancer -(livelikeroo@gmail.com)
- Depending on funds: \$350-2000 and possibly more

#### **Red Rover**

<http://redrover.org/>

#### **The Magic Bullet Fund**

[www.themagicbulletfund.org](http://www.themagicbulletfund.org)

**\*\*Covers surgery and chemotherapy ONLY. No radiation treatment at this time.**

#### **The Mosby Foundation (Radiation, Chemo, Surgery)**

[www.themosbyfoundation.org](http://www.themosbyfoundation.org)

- Covers Surgery, Chemo & Radiation, NO diagnostics, testing, CT's or x-rays
- Funding depends on age, cancer type, stage, prognosis, available funding & financial situation of pet parent and fundraising work done prior

#### **The Onyx and Breezy Foundation**

[www.onyxandbreezy.org](http://www.onyxandbreezy.org)

- Must apply to Care Credit and submit evidence of denial or approval with available balance before qualifying for assistance

#### **The Pet Fund**

[www.thepetfund.com](http://www.thepetfund.com)

#### **The Waggle Foundation**

[www.waggle.org](http://www.waggle.org)

**\*\*Fundraising site**

#### **You Caring**

[www.youcaring.com](http://www.youcaring.com)

**\*\*Fundraising site**