

Targeted Therapy

Targeted Therapy For Bladder Cancer

Targeted therapy is an innovative treatment option for bladder cancer that focuses on attacking specific molecules within cancer cells to inhibit their growth and spread. At Birmingham Urology Centre, we offer targeted therapies as part of our comprehensive approach to bladder cancer treatment, ensuring you have access to the latest and most effective treatments available.

What Is Targeted Therapy?

Targeted therapy is a type of cancer treatment designed to target specific molecules, such as proteins, that play a crucial role in the growth and survival of cancer cells. Unlike traditional chemotherapy, which affects both cancerous and healthy cells, targeted therapy aims to block the function of these specific molecules, leading to more precise treatment with fewer side effects.

How Targeted Therapy Works

Targeted therapies work by identifying and attacking specific abnormalities within cancer cells. These drugs can:

- Block the signals that tell cancer cells to grow.
- Prevent cancer cells from repairing themselves.
- Target proteins that help cancer cells survive.
- Inhibit the development of blood vessels that supply nutrients to tumours, thereby starving the cancer cells.

For bladder cancer, targeted therapy is often used in cases where the cancer is advanced, has spread to other parts of the body, or has not responded to traditional treatments like chemotherapy or surgery.

Types Of Targeted Therapy For Bladder Cancer

At Birmingham Urology Centre, the following types of targeted therapy may be considered:

- **FGFR inhibitors:** These drugs target and block the fibroblast growth factor receptor (FGFR), a protein that is often overactive in some types of bladder cancer. By inhibiting FGFR, these drugs can slow down or stop the growth of cancer cells. Erdafitinib is one example of an FGFR inhibitor used in bladder cancer treatment.
- **VEGF inhibitors:** These drugs target the vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) pathway, which plays a key role in angiogenesis, the process by which new blood vessels form to supply nutrients to tumours. By inhibiting VEGF, these drugs can reduce blood supply to the tumour, slowing its growth.
- **HER2 inhibitors:** In some cases, bladder cancer cells may have an overexpression of the HER2

protein, which promotes cell growth. HER2 inhibitors work by blocking this protein, thereby preventing the cancer cells from proliferating.

When Is Targeted Therapy Used?

Targeted therapy for bladder cancer is typically used in the following scenarios:

- **Advanced or metastatic bladder cancer:** When the cancer has spread beyond the bladder and cannot be treated with surgery alone, targeted therapy may be used to manage the disease.
- **Refractory bladder cancer:** If the cancer does not respond to standard treatments like chemotherapy, targeted therapy may be an alternative option.
- **As part of a combination therapy:** Targeted therapy may be used alongside other treatments, such as immunotherapy or chemotherapy, to enhance the overall effectiveness of cancer treatment.

Benefits Of Targeted Therapy

Targeted therapy offers several benefits for bladder cancer patients:

- **Precision treatment:** By focusing on specific molecules within cancer cells, targeted therapy provides a more precise approach to treatment, potentially leading to better outcomes.
- **Fewer side effects:** Because targeted therapies are designed to attack cancer cells specifically, they generally cause fewer side effects compared to traditional chemotherapy.
- **Potential for combination treatments:** Targeted therapies can be combined with other treatments, such as immunotherapy, to improve overall effectiveness.

Side Effects Of Targeted Therapy

While targeted therapy generally has fewer side effects than traditional chemotherapy, it can still cause some adverse reactions, including:

- **Fatigue**
- **Diarrhoea**
- **Skin reactions**
- **High blood pressure**
- **Mouth sores**

Your team at Birmingham Urology Centre will monitor you closely during treatment and manage any side effects that arise.

What To Expect During Treatment

The process of receiving targeted therapy depends on the specific drug being used. Targeted therapies are typically administered orally in pill form or intravenously. The frequency and duration of treatment vary based

on the drug and your individual treatment plan.

During treatment, regular monitoring through blood tests, imaging scans, and clinical assessments will be essential to evaluate the effectiveness of the therapy and manage any side effects.

Follow-Up Care

After completing targeted therapy, ongoing follow-up care is crucial to monitor your response to treatment and check for any signs of cancer recurrence. This may include regular imaging tests, blood tests, and consultations with your urology team.

Why Choose Birmingham Urology Centre

At Birmingham Urology Centre, we are committed to providing the highest quality care in bladder cancer treatment. Our team of experienced urologists and oncologists work together to offer personalised treatment plans that include the latest advancements in targeted therapy. By choosing us, you benefit from cutting-edge treatments tailored to your specific needs, all delivered in a supportive and compassionate environment.

Contact us

For more information about targeted therapy for bladder cancer or to schedule a consultation, please contact Birmingham Urology Centre today. Our dedicated team is here to guide you through every step of your treatment journey, ensuring you receive the best possible care. Take control of your health with confidence—reach out to us today.