

CANCER PATHWAYS
Information for patients

IS-0502E

Procedures and tests for suspected metastasis of unknown origin

You have been referred for assessment by the specialist health service because there is a suspicion of a cancer diagnosis. Specialised procedures and tests will determine whether or not you have cancer. If it is shown that you do have cancer, your treatment will be planned in consultation with you.

You have been referred for assessment via the Cancer pathway for metastasis of unknown origin. The Cancer pathways are intended to give patients and relatives predictability and security and are national standardised pathways which are discipline-based. The aim is to speed up your assessment and the start of treatment and minimise waiting times, in order to make the assessment period as predictable and stress-free as possible for you.

The Cancer pathways define the number of calendar days that each part of the assessment should take. These are called pathway timescales. Pathway timescales are targets rather than absolute requirements. For some patients, there will be medical reasons why the Cancer pathways should be longer or shorter than the timescales stated in the national pathway.

- **Procedures and tests for suspected cancer**

The aim of the assessment and the procedures and tests you will undergo is to determine your medical condition. You will be told about the procedures and tests that are relevant for you and when they will be carried out.

Once the procedures and tests have been completed, you will be given information

on possible treatments and what to expect next.

All hospitals that investigate and treat cancer patients have their own cancer pathway coordinators, who will make the necessary preparations for your pathway by booking appointments for your procedures and tests. You can contact the cancer pathway coordinator if you have any questions concerning practical matters relating to your assessment, appointments, etc. The cancer pathway coordinator is often a nurse, but may also have a different professional background.

Medical questions will be answered by a doctor.

- **Assessment phases**

Your assessment will normally be completed within 21 calendar days. For medical reasons, it may sometimes take longer. The assessment period is the period from receipt of the referral by the hospital until the assessment has been completed and it has either been confirmed that you do not have cancer, or you have been given a diagnosis and a decision has been taken as regards your treatment. The timescales are stated in the Cancer pathway for metastasis of unknown origin.

The various phases of the assessment	Comments	Recommended within	
<p>Phase 1: This is the period from receipt of your referral by the hospital until your first appointment for procedures and tests in the pathway</p>	<p>The cancer pathway coordinator will book the necessary appointments for your procedures and tests.</p>	<p>7 calendar days</p>	
<p>Phase 2: This is the period from your first appointment for your procedures and tests in the pathway until your assessment is completed</p>	<p>During this period, you will undergo tests and procedures in order to determine your medical condition.</p> <p>Once the results of the procedures and tests are available, it will usually be possible to determine what needs to happen next and what sort of treatment you will need, if any.</p>	<p>14 calendar days</p>	
<p>Phase 3: This is the period from you being diagnosed as having cancer and completing all the tests and procedures in the pathway until the start of your treatment</p>	<p>Once all your procedures and tests have been completed, the treatment that is best for you will be determined. Any decision concerning your treatment will be taken in consultation with you, normally based on an assessment by a multidisciplinary team.</p> <p>Depending on your diagnosis, surgical treatment, medicinal treatment or radiotherapy may be appropriate.</p>	<p>Surgical treatment</p>	<p>14 calendar days</p>
		<p>Medicinal treatment</p>	<p>10 calendar days</p>
		<p>Radiotherapy</p>	<p>14 calendar days</p>

Patients with metastasis of unknown origin will normally start treatment within 31 to 35 calendar days from the date on which the hospital receives the referral. For medical reasons, it can sometimes take longer. Your doctor will tell you what to expect and give you more information on your cancer pathway.

For more information, visit helsenorge.no. The hospital that assesses you will also have information on its website.

Notes