Department of Radiation Oncology

The Department of Radiation Oncology (http://radonc.wustl.edu) was created on July 1, 2001, having been part of the Mallinckrodt Institute of Radiology for many decades. The department has a broad academic program that focuses on excellence in patient care and the development of new treatment paradigms; innovative research in each of the four divisions of clinical, physics, biology and bioinformatics; and teaching for residents in radiation oncology, medical students and allied health personnel. The department is one of the largest, most academically balanced and best equipped in the country, and is responsible for all radiation therapy procedures at Washington University Medical Center. Our faculty have gained international recognition for innovative technological advances in physics and treatment planning, biological research, computer applications and clinical investigation.

Milestones

- Implementation of novel respiratory gating algorithms
- Development of biomarkers of DNA repair capacity of tumors
- Demonstrated the use of proton therapy
- Implementation of first Mevion S250 single-room proton therapy system
- Implementation of real-time MRI guidance for radiation therapy treatment with the ViewRay system. Real-time MRI guidance provides the ability to see tumors move in real-time during a patient's entire treatment. This helps ensure that tumor targets are hit and health tissue is spared.
- Acquisition of high-intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU) with MRI thermometry mapping

The Department of Radiation Oncology currently occupies a large and convenient clinical facility on the lower level of the Center for Advanced Medicine. The downtown clinical facility includes nine treatment rooms, three simulator rooms, and a brachytherapy center with two high dose-rate treatment units. Furthermore, the facility houses the latest Gamma Knife, the ICON unit. We have advanced treatment planning computer systems for 3D conformal and intensity-modulated radiation therapy. We have six linear accelerators with on-board CT imaging capability. The brachytherapy suite includes capability for high dose-rate remote afterloading and for image-guided permanent prostate seed implants. Interstitial and external hyperthermia treatments are also available. In 2013, we implemented a new type of proton treatment facility, using a superconducting synchrocyclotron mounted on a gantry. In addition, we implemented the world's first MRI-guided radiation therapy treatment program in 2014. The department provides radiation therapy treatment at Siteman Cancer Center-South County, Siteman Cancer Center at Barnes-Jewish St. Peters Hospital, and Alton Memorial Hospital.

The Physics faculty have research laboratories and offices on the fourth floor of the Clinical Sciences Research Building plus designated areas adjacent to the clinical facility in the Center for Advanced Medicine (CAM) building. The Radiation Biology laboratory and faculty offices are housed at the 4511 Forest Park Building and Wohl Hospital Building.

Website: http://radonc.wustl.edu

Degrees & Requirements

The Department of Radiation Oncology works closely with the Department of Biomedical Engineering to jointly offer a post-PhD Graduate Certificate in Medical Physics. Further information about this program can be found in the Biomedical Engineering (http://bulletin.wustl.edu/grad/engineering/biomedical/#degreerequirements) section of this Bulletin.

While the Department of Radiation Oncology does not offer its own degree, some of the department's courses are open to students in the MD and MSTP (MD/PhD) programs. Further information about the MD and MSTP degrees can be found in the Degrees & Programs Offered (http://bulletin.wustl.edu/medicine/degrees) section of this Bulletin.

Research

Please visit the Department of Radiation Oncology website (http://radonc.wustl.edu/research) for more information about current research in the department.

Faculty

Department Head
Dennis Hallahan, MD

Clerkship Director
Maria Thomas, MD

Director of Education in Medical Physics
Rao Khan, PhD

Visit our website for more information about our faculty (https://radonc.wustl.edu/faculty) and their appointments.

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Courses

Post-PhD Graduate Certificate in Medical Physics

For course information, please visit the Biomedical Engineering (http://bulletin.wustl.edu/grad/engineering/biomedical/#courses) page of this Bulletin.

MD/MSTP Programs

For course information, please visit the Radiology (http://bulletin.wustl.edu/medicine/departments/radiology/#courses) page of this Bulletin.