



# Neuroendocrine Tumors



This NCCN QUICK GUIDE™ sheet summarizes key points from the complete [NCCN Guidelines for Patients®: Neuroendocrine Tumors](#). These guidelines explain which tests and treatments are recommended by experts in cancer. To view and download the guidelines, visit [NCCN.org/patients](http://NCCN.org/patients) or, to order printed copies, visit [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com).

NCCN Guidelines  
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## What are the endocrine and neuroendocrine systems?



The endocrine system is made up of glands in the body. These glands help make and release fluids or hormones. The neuroendocrine system controls how the brain, spinal cord, and nerves (nervous system) work with the endocrine system.	<a href="#">8</a>
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## What should you know about neuroendocrine tumors?

These tumors can be cancer (malignant) or not cancer (benign). They occur in the endocrine system, which is spread throughout your body.	<a href="#">11</a>
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## How do your doctor and you decide on a treatment plan?

The results from the exam of your body, blood and urine tests, imaging tests, and in some cases a biopsy will determine your next steps of care.	<a href="#">23</a>
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## What are possible treatment options for neuroendocrine tumors?

■ Surgery is a primary treatment for neuroendocrine tumors that have not spread or have only spread to a limited extent.	<a href="#">26</a>
■ Radiation therapy uses high-energy rays to treat cancer. There are different ways to give radiation. The method used depends on the type of tumor and the purpose of radiation.	<a href="#">31</a>
■ Hepatic-directed therapies are aimed to treat cancer in the liver. These therapies include different types of embolization, along with cytoreductive surgery, and ablation.	<a href="#">31</a>
■ Drugs can also be given to treat cancer throughout the body. This is called systemic therapy. Some of the systemic therapies for neuroendocrine tumors include chemotherapy, targeted therapy, and immunotherapy.	<a href="#">32</a>
■ Somatostatin analogs are drugs that are similar to the hormone somatostatin. Somatostatin analogs reduce the amount of hormone secreted from the functional tumors and help stabilize tumor growth.	<a href="#">34</a>
■ Radiopharmaceutical drugs may be used to treat certain types of neuroendocrine tumors that start in the middle of the GI (gastrointestinal) tract. This type of drug includes a radioactive substance that gives off small amounts of radiation.	<a href="#">35</a>
■ Clinical trials are research studies that people choose to take part in. Clinical trials are an important option for people with neuroendocrine tumors.	<a href="#">36</a>



## What are some of the first treatment options for the following neuroendocrine tumors?

<b>Jejunum, ileum, and colon</b>	Surgery to remove the tumor is usually recommended. Your doctor may remove some lymph nodes and check the blood vessels in the area for cancer.	<a href="#">42</a>
<b>Duodenum</b>	If you have locoregional disease, your doctor will consider the type of surgery that is best for you.	<a href="#">43</a>
<b>Appendix</b>	If you have a tumor that is 2 cm or smaller, your doctor will remove the appendix. If the tumor is larger than 2 cm, your doctor may remove the appendix and right side of the colon.	<a href="#">44</a>
<b>Rectum</b>	Surgery may be an option. The type of surgery is based on the size of the tumor and extent of disease.	<a href="#">45</a>
<b>Stomach (gastric)</b>	Your doctor will consider different types of surgery. Treatment options depend on the gastrin levels and the extent of disease in this area.	<a href="#">47</a>
<b>Thymus</b>	Surgery may be an option for stages I to III. If surgery is not the best first option, your doctor may consider observation, radiation therapy, and systemic therapy.	<a href="#">53</a>
<b>Lungs or bronchi (broncho-pulmonary)</b>	Knowing the stage will allow your treatment team to assess if surgery is an option. Other treatments (ie, radiation therapy, systemic therapies, or observation) are available if surgery is not the best first option, or if you have metastatic disease.	<a href="#">55</a>
<b>Neuroendocrine tumors of the pancreas</b>	Surgery may be an option depending on the extent of disease. Treatment depends on the type of neuroendocrine tumors in the pancreas (see the list of types on page 62).	<a href="#">62</a>
<b>Poorly differentiated neuroendocrine carcinomas</b>	<b>For large or small cell type, or an unknown primary:</b> Therapy options depend on the site of disease. Treatment options may include surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy. Sometimes given at the same time, or one after another.	<a href="#">78</a>

## How do I decide between options?

Ask your doctors many questions. You can also get a second opinion, attend support groups, and compare the benefits and possible risks.	<a href="#">80</a>
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