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## New radiotherapy beats cancer

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Ann Hudgell appreciates the new treatment she was given

A VIRGINIA Water woman has said she is grateful for a new treatment which helped her battle with cancer.

Ann Hudgell has been cancer free for two years after undergoing a dose of intraoperative radiotherapy (IORT) – a targeted radiotherapy is delivered to the tumour bed, sparing the surrounding healthy tissue in the heart, lungs and ribs from radiation exposure.

The 74-year-old had the IORT at the same time as she had a tumour removed in an operation at a private clinic, and was thankful to the groundbreaking treatment.

The mother of two said: "I don't know anyone who has had breast cancer, so I didn't talk to anyone with direct experience of the disease. I felt worried about my health but also about my work as that's what I enjoy doing most."

She added: "Within four weeks of having the operation, I was back to work and living life almost normally again."

"It's been two years since I had my tumours removed. I'm pleased to say there is still no sign of the cancer returning. I'm now looking forward to living the rest of my life."

"I'm very grateful that my

consultant knew about intraoperative radiotherapy, or I may have just gone along with normal radiotherapy, not knowing that there was a choice available to me."

Ms Hudgell was recommended the IORT by her consultant Dr Maisam Fazel, consultant onco plastic and reconstructive breast surgeon at Spire Thames Valley Hospital.

He said: "Radiotherapy is an important part of breast cancer care and the option to have single dose IORT can have a positive impact on quality of life and recovery for appropriate patients."

"IORT is an effective and targeted radiotherapy which is not only convenient for patients but spares surrounding healthy tissue from unnecessary radiation exposure."

Ms Hudgell took part in a study of 18 early stage breast cancer patients who opted for IORT, and 89 per cent of those patients rated their recovery as good, very good or excellent following the treatment.

IORT is not currently available on the NHS. NHS England has decided to wait until more clinical trial data becomes available before making a decision on commissioning.