

Course Overview

The ASTRO Annual Refresher Course—with the tagline Best Practices and Emerging Trends—is designed to provide a comprehensive review of the latest treatment methods and core competencies for the major disease sites, with a look at the emerging trends and technologies that may impact daily practice.

Each year the program features eight disease sites (breast, central nervous system, gastrointestinal: upper and lower genitourinary, gynecologic: endometrial and cervical, lymphomas, head and neck, and thoracic); three contouring sessions with topics rotated each year; and three sessions with topics that rotate each year (2027 will feature sarcomas, functional radiation medicine, and oligometastatic cancers/SBRT). Attendees are also offered pediatrics and gynecologic: vulvar and vaginal as pre-recorded sessions.

The Annual Refresher Course is a virtual three-day program with livestreamed presentations and moderated Q&A. The 2027 Annual Refresher Course will be held February 3–5.

Presentation

The Annual Refresher Course is not a typical speaking engagement. We ask presenters to succinctly describe what is the current in-practice latest and greatest and how do you as a radiation oncologist implement that. Preparing the content in this schema is a time-consuming endeavor and you likely won't be able to repurpose other presentations. But, the educational value for attendees is extraordinary. Attendees are looking to you as an expert to inform and guide their practice and clinical decision-making.

To assist you in this, the Program Committee will ask for an early deadline for a preliminary slide submission. The Program Committee will review how you're planning to approach your presentation, so an outline is sufficient rather than a polished version. We will also hold a faculty planning meeting later in the year.

Content

Based on attendee demographics and feedback, please consider the following when you plan your presentation:

- Community-based focus rather than academic
- Practical guidelines and standards of care
- Actual clinical situations; Practical, contemporary case-based scenarios/discussions
- Best practices versus history of research and study analysis
- Translate evidence into clear, actionable decision-making frameworks
- Techniques and tips/tricks
- Emerging trends and technologies that are currently impacting daily practice
- References to contouring atlases and papers

Contouring Sessions

- Includes case submission in addition to didactic presentation; Attendees will have an opportunity to contour the practice cases you submit using an online contouring platform and receive a metric score based on the accuracy of their contours compared to yours.
- Please coordinate with the other speaker for your topic area to avoid overlap in content.
- Focus on known challenges; pearls in CTVs and nodal levels; how to use imaging; regional coverage; and tradeoffs

Format

Please frame each topic/subtopic within your presentation using the following format:

- Introduction: Summary of current standards
- Main part: Analysis of new developments
- Punch lines: Big picture (summary of both parts)

Style

Attendees appreciate hearing you outline clearly how you approach cases and what is the pathway. They value a straightforward approach rather than arguments for different ways of doing it depending on the clinical nuances of each individual case.

However, we also encourage you to not be too dogmatic where there really are several correct ways of doing things or when there is remaining controversy. When there are multiple ways of doing things, be specific about when you do this one and when you do that one and be concrete about the facts that lead you to make each decision point, even if they're not totally evidence-based. For example, "In my practice, these are the factors that I look at, and these are the cutoffs I personally use."

Recent Attendee Demographics

	2026	2025	2024	2023	2022
U.S. Based	82%	79%	86%	85%	90%
International	18%	21%	14%	15%	10%
Radiation Oncologists	84%	85%	85%	88%	84%
Residents/Students	14%	13%	12%	10%	13%
Medical Physicists	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other Specialties/Administrators	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Academic/University Setting	38%	38%	39%	33%	38%
Private Practice/ Community Based System	45%	46%	43%	54%	47%
Government/Public Sector	11%	11%	11%	7%	5%
Independent Contractor	3%	3%	4%	2%	5%
Industry	1%	0.5%	1%	1%	1%
Not indicated	1%	2%	3%	2%	4%

Attendee Years Out of Residency – 2026 ASTRO Annual Refresher Course

Years Out	# Registrants
< 1 Year	10
1–5 Years	59
6–8 Years	27
9–10 Years	19
11–20 Years	86
> 20 Years	127
No data	127