

# Treatment for Patients with Brain or Central Nervous System Cancers

This information will help prepare you and your caregiver for your treatment.

## What to Expect

You will receive external beam radiation therapy, a noninvasive treatment.

## Side Effects

Some people will develop side effects that may occur following the start of radiation therapy.

- Fatigue is common during treatment.
- Hair loss may occur in the area being treated. When it grows back, the texture or thickness might be slightly different.
- Headaches and/or dizziness
- Changes in speech, memory, and/or thought-processing
- Inflammation of the ear canal with irritation or sense of stuffiness/fullness
- Altered sense of taste or smell
- Scalp irritation including redness, itching, or dry peeling of the skin

Please discuss problems or concerns about side effects or any part of your treatment with your doctor, nurse, or therapist while on treatment.

## Caution

- Report any skin changes to your doctor, nurse, or therapist.
- Heating pads and/or very hot water can cause pain or skin irritation to the treatment area.
- Hot tubs or saunas are not encouraged while receiving radiation treatment.
- **Do not** use products with alcohol, including alcohol pads, on your skin in the area being treated.
- **Do not** use makeup, perfumes, or powders in the area being treated.

## Care

Bathe and shower using warm water and a mild unscented soap such as Dove<sup>®</sup>, Cetaphil<sup>®</sup>, or baby soap.

- **Do not** use a washcloth, scrubbing cloth, or brush when bathing.
- Pat skin dry with a soft towel or allow to air-dry.

**Do not** use moisturizers within 4 hours **before** your radiation treatment.

**Do not** dye your hair or use color treatment products (i.e. color treatment shampoos and conditioner)

Avoid tanning or burning your skin during and after treatment.

Avoid extreme temperature to the area being treated, including:

- Hot tubs
- Heating pads
- Ice pack

**Do not** use products with alcohol, including alcohol pads, on your skin in the area being treated.

A daily vitamin is OK during your treatment. **Do not** take other vitamins or any supplements, including both nutritional and herbal supplements, without talking to your doctor.

## Contact your nurse or doctor immediately for:

- Altered mental status
- Problems with balance
- Headaches that do not go away with Tylenol
- Sudden weakness to the left or right side
- Blurry/double vision
- Numbness/tingling to extremities
- Persistent nausea and vomiting

## Contact Us

During office hours, call the clinic. After-hours, call 214-645-8525.