

Radiation Treatment Information for Patients with Prostate Cancer

What to Expect

This information will help prepare you and your caregiver for your treatment. You will receive external beam radiation therapy, a noninvasive treatment.

Side Effects

Some people will develop side effects that usually occur within 1-3 weeks following the start of radiation therapy. The type of reaction and how severe they are will depend on many factors, including the dose of radiation and number of treatments prescribed by your provider.

- Mild fatigue is common during treatment.
- Bowel habit changes may occur during treatment. These may include thinner, looser stools and increased gas and bloating. These will depend on the radiation plan you specifically are receiving. For men experiencing a higher volume of bowel movements or even diarrhea, this may produce pain in the peri-rectal or anal area. You may take $\frac{1}{2}$ - 1 tablet of **Imodium**® once per day if you are having frequent loose stools or diarrhea on that day or as directed by your physician. You may purchase **Imodium**® over the counter at your local pharmacy.
- For gas/bloating, you can try taking **Gas-X**® or **Beano**® to help alleviate those symptoms. These can also be purchased over the counter.



- Urinary discomfort may occur about 3-4 weeks after the start of treatment. A feeling of urgency and frequent urination with a mild burning sensation is possible.
- Skin changes are less common with few men experiencing tanning, temporary hair loss in the groin area, or dryness.

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

Care

Bathe and shower daily using warm water and a mild unscented soap, such as **Dove®**, **Cetaphil®**, or baby soap.

- **DO NOT** use a washcloth, scrubbing cloth, or brush when bathing.
- Pat skin dry with a soft towel.

Moisturizers may be applied to the treatment area as needed.

- If your skin is itchy, **DO NOT** scratch it. Instead, use moisturizers to aid in relief.
- **DO NOT** use moisturizers within 4 hours before your radiation treatment.

To minimize skin irritation, wear loose-fitting cotton underwear and clothing. Avoid tanning or burning your skin during and after treatment. Avoid extreme temperature to the area being treated, including:

- Hot tubs
- Water bottles
- Heating pads
- Ice packs

DO NOT use products with alcohol, including alcohol pads, on your skin in the area being treated.

Swimming is permitted only if you **DO NOT** have any skin reactions during your treatment and the pool is chlorinated. Rinse off chlorine right after getting out of pool.

Contact Your Nurse or Doctor if You Experience

- Bowel problems, including diarrhea and cramping, bleeding, and/or discharge
- Pain, unusual odor, spasms, bleeding, or burning during urination
- Frequent urination
- Red, swollen, blistering, or tender areas of skin
- Any new or unusual symptoms

Call Immediately if You Have Any of the Following Symptoms

- Temperature of 100.5°F or above
- Any new or unusual symptoms

Contact Us

During or after office hours, call the Radiation Oncology Clinic line at 214-645-8525. We will connect you with your team during office hours or with on-call staff after office hours.