

# End of Gynecological Treatment Frequently Asked Questions



## Post-Treatment Appointments

Please follow up with other members of your health care team involved in your cancer care. You will be given a follow-up appointment to see your radiation oncologist in a few weeks or months.

Please ensure that all imaging and labs are completed prior to your follow-up appointment with your radiation oncologist.

## Side Effects and Symptom Management

- Symptoms related to your treatment may last for weeks or months after your treatment is complete.
- Your symptoms may initially worsen but will gradually improve over the next few weeks.
- Common post-treatment side effects include:
  - **GI symptoms:** Diarrhea may occur; please take Imodium as needed. Avoid foods that irritate the bowel such as alcohol, seasonings, spices, or caffeine. You may also want to avoid high-fiber foods, such as fresh fruit and vegetables, as well as whole-grain breads and cereals.
  - **Pain** may worsen the week after radiation but will gradually improve over the next few weeks.
  - **Fatigue:** Take rest periods and get plenty of sleep during your recovery period.
  - **Urinary changes:** You may have increased urgency and frequency of urination and burning when urinating. This will improve 3-4 weeks after radiation. Continue using Azo<sup>®</sup> until these symptoms improve.

*If any of your symptoms worsen, do not improve, or you experience new symptoms, contact the clinic via MyChart message or call your radiation oncology nurse for further direction at **214-645-8525**.*

## Vaginal Symptoms

### Scar Tissue and Sexual Activity

- You may develop some scar tissue in the vagina that could cause it to shorten and close.
- Your vagina must remain open so that your doctor can examine you at the follow-up visits.

### Two ways to prevent the vagina from closing:

- Use a dilator: Begin using the provided dilator for 15-20 minutes 3 times a week, starting 2 weeks after you finish radiation treatment. Continue using the dilator until you are instructed to stop by your physician.
- Sexual intercourse: You may resume sexual intercourse within 4-6 weeks after completion of implant procedures. Do not be concerned about giving your partner cancer or exposing them to radiation. The source of radioactivity is gone once the implant is removed.

## Vaginal Symptoms

### Vaginal Dryness and Bleeding

- You may have a small amount of bleeding for a few weeks after intercourse or use of the dilator. This is normal. If you have questions or concerns, call the clinic at 214-645-8525 and ask to speak to a nurse.
- For dryness we recommend K-Y Jelly or any other water-based lubricant suggested by your pharmacist. **DO NOT** use Vaseline, hand lotion, baby oil, etc. (These are oil-based and cannot be washed away with water.)

## Diet

- A well-balanced diet and adequate water intake are essential to your recovery after radiation therapy.
- If you require supplemental nutrition, please follow your dietitian's guidelines.
- Please check with your oncology team before you resume your vitamins and supplements that were discontinued prior to treatment.

## Exercise

- Safe levels of exercise can assist you with your recovery after radiation therapy.
- Before exercising, please check first with your physician.

## Medications

- Never stop or change your medications without consulting your doctor first.
- Review your current prescription status and whether any refills are necessary.

## Emotional Well-Being

Every person reacts differently to treatment. You may experience anxiety, depression, anger, frustration, fear, or helplessness. If you start to experience severe depression or suicidal thoughts, please seek immediate medical attention.

***Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255***

***Crisis Text Line: Text CONNECT to 741741***

**Notes:**

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