Your Guide to the Treatment Process

This guide provides an overview of the radiation therapy treatment process along with instructions about appointments and procedures. Following the instructions will make your experience more convenient and comfortable. If you have questions at any time, please don't hesitate to ask. Our goal is to support your patient experience with timely assistance, courtesy and respect.

Please note that during your radiation treatment, family members or individuals who accompany you to the appointment will be asked to wait in the reception area.

The course of your radiation therapy includes:

- Consultation with your radiation oncologist
- Simulation procedures to help plan your treatment
- Radiation treatments delivered during daily appointments

Consultation

During this visit, you and your family will meet with your radiation oncologist to discuss the treatment goals.

Simulation

After the consultation, you'll be scheduled for the simulation. Simulation is a step in the process during which the medical team creates an individualized plan to pinpoint the target area where the radiation beams will be focused. Depending on the location of the tumor, we use 3D and 4D CT and MRI scanning to help plan locations for treatment fields, which mark the exact places where the radiation will enter your body.

In some cases it may be necessary to make a custom mold to help you stay in a certain position. It is important to remain very still during the simulation process.

The radiation therapist will place small marks on your skin and/or the treatment device, then take photographs and images of the area on your body to be treated. Tape may be placed over these marks to prevent them from coming off. DO NOT wash the marks off. If the marks disappear it may be necessary to repeat the simulation process, which delays your treatment.

To align you consistently on the table for each treatment, it also may be necessary to place small, permanent dots or "tattoos" the size of a pencil point on your skin. We will ask your permission to do this.

The radiation oncologist may determine that another simulation is needed before treatment can begin. If so, you will be scheduled for a second simulation appointment before you leave. After the simulation procedures are complete, your first treatment appointment will be scheduled.

Treatment

Please arrive 10 minutes early for your appointment to avoid causing delays for others.

Plan to be at the radiation center approximately 30 to 45 minutes. Our radiation therapists will try to arrange a daily appointment time that is convenient for you. However, it may not be possible to provide your preferred time. The radiation therapists will be happy to change your appointment to the preferred time if it becomes available during the course of your treatment.

On your first treatment day, the radiation therapist will take X-ray images of the area on your body to be treated. This will take approximately 30 minutes.

Each treatment will take from 15 to 30 minutes, depending on the number of areas to be treated. Occasionally there may be delays in receiving your treatment due to unforeseen circumstances. We apologize in advance and will always work you into treatment as close to your appointment time as possible.

After your first treatment day, you'll be scheduled for a weekly follow-up appointment with the radiation oncologist and radiation nurse. During this appointment your progress is evaluated and you have the opportunity to ask questions about your treatment. You also may need to have blood drawn at that time so that your medical team can monitor your progress. Plan to spend an extra 30 minutes on those days.

Weekly Physician/Nurse Visits

Each week you will be seen by a physician and a nurse. This is an important part of your treatment management. It is a good time to ask questions and discuss any problems or concerns you may have during your course of treatment.

When Treatment is Complete

On your last day of treatment, the nurse will explain how to properly care for your skin in the treated area. You also may be scheduled to return for an appointment in four to six weeks after treatment is completed. In addition, you may be given other appointments for tests to be completed before your return visit. Keeping these appointments is very important so we can monitor any side effects and ensure that you continue to respond to your treatment.

Billing Information

During the first visit to Radiation Oncology, you will complete several forms. Our office personnel will obtain the necessary information to file your insurance claims.

After services are provided, you will receive a bill for professional fees from the radiation oncologist and one for technical fees from the facility. If you have any questions regarding your billing statement(s), contact our office supervisor at **214-645-8525.**

Patient Satisfaction Survey

Please complete and return the patient satisfaction survey that will be mailed to you with a self-addressed, postage-paid envelope. We appreciate your feedback so we can continue to meet the needs of future patients.