

Radiotherapy Information Sheet

Introduction

Radiotherapy uses radiation beam to kill cancer cells while preserving nearby normal tissues as much as possible. Radiotherapy can be delivered in several ways, with different machines, techniques, number of treatment fractions and dosage. The oncologist will choose the best treatment method for you.

For cancer in pelvic region, external high energy beams are usually used for radiotherapy treatment, which is usually given 5 times a week for 5 to 7 weeks. It could also be used concurrently with or without chemotherapy or brachytherapy afterwards. The radiation beams do not make you radioactive, therefore it is safe for you to contact with people, including infants or pregnant woman, after receiving the treatment.

Procedures

1. Moulding procedure

To immobilize and reproduce your pelvis position during treatment, therapists and technicians will customize an easyfoam or vaclok to stabilize your pelvis.

2. Computer Tomography scan

Patient will be positioned with customized mould to undergo CT scan. The CT scan acquires 3D images for oncologist to determine the treatment region and coverage.

3. Treatment planning

With the aid of computer, the most suitable treatment plan will be generated to achieve oncologist's goals. The process takes several days since the dose will be calculated repeatedly to attain the best result.

4. Treatment

No pain will be experienced during the radiotherapy treatment, it is similar to taking an X-ray. You only have to lie into the tailor-made mould on top of the treatment couch. Radiation therapists will position your body, then leave the room and monitor your condition closely through the CCTV. You can speak to the therapists through the intercom or press the call bell should you have urgent needs. After verification of the images and readjustment by the treatment machine, the radiation beam will be delivered. The treatment takes around 20 to 30 minutes and please keep still during the whole process.

Patient's Label Patient Name: _____ Hospital No: _____ Episode No: _____
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Radiotherapy Treatment for Pelvis

Common side effects and coping approaches

Side effect	Coping approaches
General: Fatigue Loss of appetite	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Get plenty of rest to restore energy 2. Try small frequent meals with high energy and protein inclusive 3. Try to keep markings on skin, do not redraw by yourself if faded away or blurred 4. Drink enough water 5. Keep body weight
Urinary changes: Difficult in holding urine Polyuria Dysuria Pain while urination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Watch your fluids intake 2. Try to hold full bladder (wear diaper if necessary) 3. Limit fluids before bedtime 4. Avoid caffeinated and alcoholic beverages 5. Ask doctor for medication if necessary
Skin reactions: Dry and itchy Reddening Sensitive, tender Peeling or blistering	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Avoid rubbing, scrubbing or scratching the treatment area 2. Keep short fingernails to prevent accidental scratching of skin 3. Wash skin with warm water only and gently pat dry with soft towel 4. Do not use non-prescribed gel, cream, perfume or deodorants 5. Wear loose cotton pants (or skirt) to avoid friction on treatment area 6. Avoid swimming, spa, sauna or sunbath during treatment and 2 weeks afterwards 7. Avoid shaving treated area, use electrical shavers if necessary
Diarrhea Rectal discomfort Peri-anal irritation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Replenish electrolytes or sport drinks 2. Avoid dietary fiber rich food such as vegetables or fruits 3. Ask doctor for anti-diarrheal drug if needed 4. Avoid staying long in washroom
Constipation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eat more fiber rich food such as vegetables and fruits

Patient's Label

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Points for attention

- Radiotherapy can cause teratogenicity. Therefore, both male and female patients should take contraceptive measures during radiotherapy.
- Please inform doctor and radiotherapists if you have undergone radiotherapy. Additional radiation on previous treatment site might cause severe complications.
- Radiotherapy may affect the function of pacemaker. Please inform our staff if you have a cardiac pacemaker.
- Consult doctor or radiotherapists for any illness or severe skin reaction.
- The skin reaction will gradually subside 2-3 weeks after the treatment. During this period, you should continue the above skin care procedures.

Disclaimer

This leaflet only provides general information pertaining to this operation / procedure. While common risks and complications are described, the list is not exhaustive, and the degree of risk could also vary between patients. Please contact your doctor for detailed information and specific enquiry.

Reference

HA Smart Patients

<https://www21.ha.org.hk/smartpatient/SPW/en-us/Disease-Information/Disease/?guid=3811ed4c-10bc-43f3-bfcc-e8ea8d747619>

Cancer Research UK

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/cancer-in-general/treatment/radiotherapy/side-effects>

Patient's Signature: _____ Date: _____

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