



Information for
patients and
carers

Radiotherapy to the bladder

You should have also received the following leaflets:

- Radiotherapy- a general guide for patients and carers
- Planning your radiotherapy treatment
- Radiotherapy treatment
- Skin Care during radiotherapy treatment
- Dietary Advice during radiotherapy treatment

During your treatment

It is important to ensure your bladder is the same size during treatment each day. You will therefore be asked to empty your bladder immediately before each treatment. CT scans will be done at regular intervals to maximise the accuracy of your treatment.

What are the benefits of this treatment?

Radiotherapy has damaging effects on cancer cells. The radiotherapy is given to try to kill the cancer cells and reduce the chance of the cancer recurring. It will cause some damage to surrounding healthy tissues resulting in some side effects.

Are there any alternatives to this treatment?

For some patients, surgery may have been offered as an alternative to radiotherapy. Your consultant will have discussed your treatment options with you.

What will happen if you do not have this treatment?

If you choose not to have this treatment, the cancer may continue to grow. Symptoms may develop and worsen. Some cancers may advance and become incurable.

Side effects of radiotherapy - early reactions-

Fatigue

As radiotherapy can damage normal tissues close to or in the treated area, your body will use a great deal of energy to repair these damaged cells. This means that tiredness is a very common side effect of radiotherapy. If you feel fit enough, gentle exercise can help. Do not force yourself to do things you do not have the energy to do.

Sore, red skin (erythema)

Radiotherapy can make the skin in the treated area become itchy, red, and sore. You can minimise this by following the advice of the radiographers (and our skin care leaflet).

Bladder symptoms

You may experience changes in the flow of your urine, a need to pass urine more often, a need to pass urine urgently, a burning sensation on passing urine and/or a small amount of blood in your urine. Your consultant may be able to prescribe you something to help with these symptoms. Drink plenty of water based fluids such as cordial. Tea and coffee can make the symptoms worse. Some people find cranberry juice helpful (Please note: - do not drink cranberry if diabetic or taking warfarin medication). Please tell the radiographers about any of these symptoms so they can ensure you do not have an infection. Always report any difficulty in passing urine to staff.

Bowel symptoms

Treatment may irritate your bowel and you might need to go to the toilet more often. Medication such as Fybogel may be prescribed for you. You may develop tenesmus, which is an urge to open your bowels without passing anything. This can feel like constipation. You may notice an increase in the amount of wind you pass. If opening your bowels becomes painful or you notice some spotting of blood, let us know. These side effects are not uncommon so do not be alarmed. Please do not modify your diet or take any medication for your bowels without discussing it with a radiographer or consultant.

Side effects of radiotherapy - late reactions

Radiotherapy to the lower abdomen in women is likely to induce the menopause. A reaction called vaginal stenosis may occur as a result of scar tissue forming after radiotherapy. Vaginal dilators can be given to those having their pelvis treated to try to prevent this happening. Please speak to a radiographer for more information about this.

Lack of semen or reduced sperm count in males may result in infertility. Radiotherapy may lead to more urgent and frequent bowel opening and passing of water. Bleeding from the back passage may occur which can require medication or surgery.

Always make sure you let the radiographers know if you experience any side effects. We need you to tell us exactly how you feel not only with regard to side effects, but also your general wellbeing. We are here to help.

Contact details

Should you require further advice or information please contact:

Radiotherapy Reception/Transport queries (01772) 522900

Radiotherapy Appointment queries (01772) 522931

Sources of further information

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk

www.nhs.uk

www.patient.co.uk

www.accessable.co.uk

www.macmillan.org.uk

All our patient information leaflets are available on our website for patients to access and download:

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets

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If you want to stop smoking you can also contact the Quit Squad Freephone 0800 328 6297.

Please ask if you would like help in understanding this information. This information can be made available in large print and in other languages.

Gujarati:

આ માહિતીને સમજવામાં સહાયતા જોઈતી હોય તો કૃપા કરીને પૂછો. આ માહિતી મોટા છપાણામાં અને અન્ય ભાષામાં ઉપલબ્ધ કરી શકાય છે.

Romanian:

Vă rugăm să întrebați dacă aveți nevoie de ajutor pentru înțelegerea acestor informații. Aceste informații pot fi puse la dispoziție în format mare și în alte limbi.”

Polish:

Poinformuj nas, jeśli potrzebna jest ci pomoc w zrozumieniu tych informacji. Informacje te można również udostępnić dużym drukiem oraz w innych językach

Punjabi:

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਸਮਝਣ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮਦਦ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੋਗੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਪੁੱਛੋ। ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਵੱਡੇ ਪ੍ਰਿੰਟ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮੁਹੱਈਆ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

Urdu:

دو سر ی زبانوں او ر بڑی اگر آپ کو ہی معلومات سمجھنے کے لیے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو یی چھپا یں ییہ ابی دست بو یسکت ہے برا ئے مہر یان پو ے یچھہ ی۔ معلومات

Arabic:

مطبوعة بأحرف كبيرة و بلغات إذا كنت تريد مساعدة في فهم هذه المعلومات يُرجى أن تطلب أخرى يمكن تو فسير هذه المعلومات

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Division: Surgery
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