



Treatment Guidelines

Chest

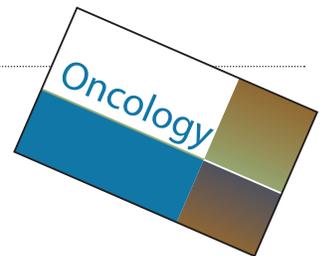
The information that you find here is to help you to know what to expect during your treatment. It also helps you to learn ways to deal with any side effects that you may have. Please ask a member of the team (doctor, nurse, technologist and nutritionist) to answer any of your questions.

Introduction

Radiation therapy side effects vary from person to person. The side effects depend on several things such as the area of the body to be treated, the type of radiation used, the amount of radiation, whether you are having chemotherapy at the same time and your general health.

Oncology Passport

This is your tool to write information and keep track about your diagnosis, treatment, possible symptoms and resources. Please bring it with you everyday.



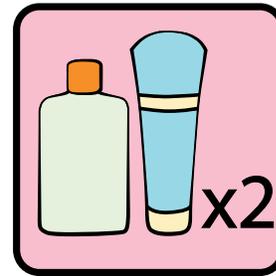
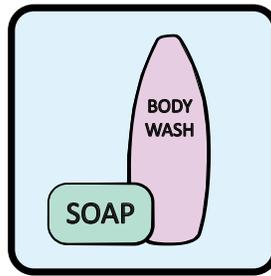
Treatment Set Up

- The technologist may apply ink “markings” on your skin for your treatments. It is important that you do not wash them off. The ink can stain clothes.
- You can shower. Swimming or hot tubs need to be discussed with your doctor.

Will the radiation therapy affect my skin?

- When radiation is given it passes through your skin to reach the area to be treated. Skin problems are an expected side effect for people who receive radiation therapy. Your skin might become dry, itchy, red or darker in color.
- Skin reactions to radiation may occur within the treatment field and begin to appear after 2 to 4 weeks.
- Advise the technologist if you notice any skin dryness, itching, tenderness, redness, peeling or weeping.

How should I care for my skin during treatment?



- Take quick showers or baths.
- Lather your hands with soap and apply gently to your skin, avoiding any markings
- Wash your skin gently with lukewarm water and mild unscented soap such as Ivory® or Dove®.
- Rinse your skin well and pat dry with a soft towel.
- Twice daily use unscented lotion such as Lubriderm®, Aveeno® or Lipikar®.
- Do not apply cream or moisturizer on skin even if the doctor prescribed it, **at least 4 hours before treatment.**
- If you have skin breakdown, stop using the lotion. Tell your technologist and if necessary, the doctor will prescribe another cream for you.
- Apply cool compresses for 10 to 15 minutes 4 times a day to relieve itching or burning.
- Choose clothes with soft fabrics and wear natural fibers such as cotton.
- Protect area of treatment from sunlight or cold and wind in winter.
- Wear sunscreen (SPF 30 or greater) when outdoors when treatment ends. Keep the treated areas of the skin covered if you must sit or stand in direct sunlight.
- If you have any skin problems or questions, please consult your doctor or nurse



What should I avoid doing to my skin during treatment?

- Do not wash off the skin markings.
- Do not use tape on the area of body treated.
- Do not use aftershave lotion, perfume or makeup to area of treatment.
- Do not rub, scrub or scratch your skin.
- Do not use heating pads, hot water bottles, hot tubs or ice packs.
- Avoid tight, restrictive clothing.
- Avoid direct long term sun exposure to the area of treatment.
- Do not shave in the treatment area

What other side effects can happen?

What are some ways to deal with them?

Esophagitis

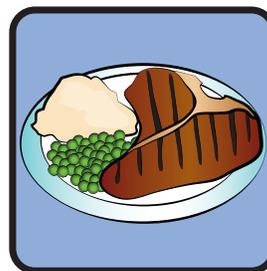
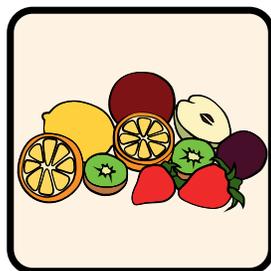
- The main side effect that patients may experience during radiation of the chest is esophagitis. Patients describe this as a dry sensation in the throat or difficulty to swallow beginning usually during the 2nd or 3rd week of chest radiation.
- This is a temporary side effect that is expected to resolve 2 to 3 weeks after treatment ends. You should advise your doctor of this symptom and he/she may prescribe a medication (usually called Magic Mouthwash) that will help relieve some of these symptoms.
- When Magic Mouthwash is prescribed for esophagitis, you should swallow the medication.
- You can also meet with the nutritionist who will help guide your food choices.

Cough, Shortness of Breath, or Fever

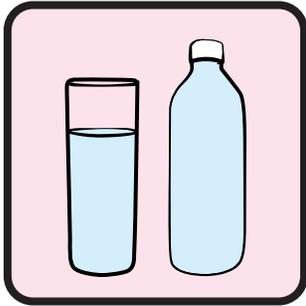
- Notify us if you develop a fever of 101°F or 38.3 °C or higher.
- Inform us if you develop a cough or feel more out of breath than usual.

Loss of appetite or weight loss

- Radiation or chemotherapy may change how food tastes, may cause loss of appetite or cause nausea.
- Eat balanced healthy meals to help improve and maintain energy and strength.



- Eat smaller and more frequent meals, eat mild, soft foods. Avoid hot spicy foods
- Do not attempt to lose weight during treatment since nutrition is important for healing
- Drink plenty of water
- Your doctor may prescribe medication to help you deal with nausea and vomiting.
- The nutritionist may help to guide you with foods to eat.



Will I feel tired?

- Fatigue or a feeling of tiredness is a common side effect.
- Energy levels increase gradually after the treatment ends.
- If you are tired, then take naps or rest periods as needed.
- Continue your regular activities but limit yourself when you feel tired. Listen to your body.
- Have a friend or family member come with you for support and to assist with driving and daily activities.
- Mild physical activity such as walking is encouraged and may be helpful to fight fatigue.
- Fatigue is also common among persons who are depressed or have difficulty to cope. Talk to your treatment team.



What can I do if I feel overwhelmed?

- Feelings of anxiety, depression, anger, or of difficulty to cope are normal. Each person has a different way of dealing with difficult situations. Tell the team if you are having any of these feelings.
- We can offer you counseling with our Psychosocial Oncology Program.
- We can also offer information and/or referral for support, such as Can Support at MUHC or community based self-help groups.

Where can I get information on the Internet?

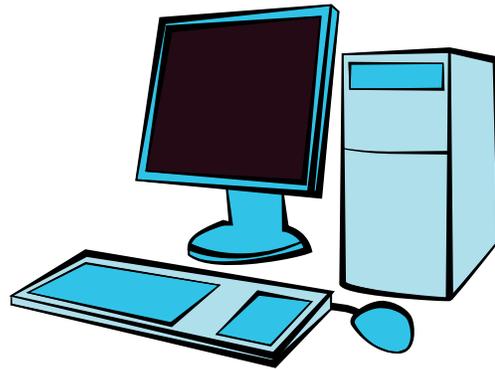
Not all information found on the Internet is accurate or reliable. If you have access to the Internet and you would like more information on your cancer or its treatment, you can visit these reliable websites:

www.cancer.ca - Canadian Cancer Society

www.fqc.qc.ca - Fondation Québécoise du Cancer

www.cancer.net - American Society of Clinical Oncology

www.cancer.gov - National Cancer Institute



What should I do if I feel very sick or if there is an emergency?

Should you experience any serious reactions that are causing you to worry, please call your doctor or nurse

- Weekdays - tel: 514-934-1934 ext. 43400.
- At night or during the weekend: call the MUHC switchboard - tel: 514- 934-1934 and ask for the Radiation Oncology Resident on Call.
- If your symptoms are particularly severe or you are unable to reach the Radiation Oncologist you should go to the emergency room of the nearest hospital.

Stereotactic Body Radiation Therapy (SBRT)

TREATMENT OF THE LUNG

- This is a specialized treatment for some patients with lung cancer or limited spread (also called metastases) to the lung. Treatment is usually delivered over the course of 2 weeks. It may involve 1 to 5 radiation treatments, each lasting approximately 45 minutes, every 3 days.
- Before each treatment, a scan will be done while you are on the treatment table. The goal is to ensure you are in the proper position for the treatment.
- Most patients who have this type of treatment will have minimal side effects. Patients may be tired and usually go to bed earlier than usual. This fatigue is temporary.
- Most patients who have this treatment will not experience esophagitis (difficulty to swallow) or radiation skin problems. There is no need to change your diet or use creams during this treatment.
- During treatment your doctor will meet with you once a week. After completion of the treatment, you will be given a follow-up appointment 2 to 4 weeks post-treatment to meet with your radiation oncologist.

IMPORTANT PLEASE READ

Information provided by pamphlet is for educational purposes. It is not intended to replace the advice or instruction of a professional healthcare practitioner, or to substitute medical care. Contact a qualified healthcare practitioner if you have any questions concerning your care.

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