

Treatment

When you begin your treatment, the radiation therapists will introduce

themselves and describe to you what will happen. You are welcome to have a support person accompany you. On one of the treatment days, it may be possible for your support person to come with you into the treatment room to observe your treatment

set-up. A suitable day can be arranged with the treatment staff. You will be shown the control area, which is where the radiation therapists turn the machine on.

Radiation therapists will position you on the treatment bed in exactly the same way as you were in the CT scanner. The lights are turned down and red laser lights are matched to the marks on your skin. Often, we will need to move you slightly to get you in the right position. This is easiest if you just relax, breathe normally and let us do the moving. It is important to keep still once we have you in the correct position. The machine may come close to you but will not touch you. You may see equipment being placed into the machine during your treatment - this is to tailor the treatment to each individual.

The radiation therapists will leave the room to switch the machine on. Although you will be alone in the room for short periods, the staff will be monitoring you through a closed circuit TV camera and intercom. You may be treated from

Radiation therapy is delivered using a large machine called a Linear Accelerator (Linac, or LA).



more than one direction and often the machine will be moved by the radiation therapists from outside the room. The time the machine is on varies between a few seconds to a couple of minutes. The machine creates some noise while operating, however, you will not see or feel the radiation. It is important to keep as still as possible. If you want to stop treatment for any reason, raise your hand and the radiation therapists will come into the room. Otherwise, do not move until the radiation therapist tells you the treatment has finished.

Throughout the course of your treatment, we may take images to confirm correct targeting of the area. These images don't show us how effective the treatment is, but confirm the accuracy of the set-up.

To ensure that you get the best care possible, please inform your radiation therapist if you experience any problems or have any questions or concerns at any time during your treatment.

SIDE EFFECTS

A variety of side effects may be experienced depending on the area of the body being treated and the type of treatment given. Side effects will therefore vary considerably from patient to patient, and the radiation oncologist/ registrar will discuss possible side effects when explaining the plan of treatment to you. There are also site-specific booklets that will be given to you to help your understanding of these side effects. If you are concerned about your side effects, please inform the radiation therapist or nursing staff. Your side effects will also be monitored by the radiation oncologist/registrar at your weekly review appointment. These appointments are also a good opportunity to renew prescriptions, if needed.

APPOINTMENTS

Regular department hours for treatment appointments are 8.00am to 4.45pm.

An identification card will be issued when you arrive for your CT appointment. This must be with you at all times whilst in the department. If the card is lost, a replacement card should be obtained from the receptionist before your treatment is given. You are likely to have a 10 or 20 minute treatment appointment each week day, and generally you will be in and out of the department within half an hour.

During treatment, most patients will see the radiation oncologist/registrar for a treatment review clinic to check on how they are managing with their treatment. Expect to be in the department for a length of time on that day.

Please note that there are up to 40 patients for daily scheduling on each machine, so it is difficult to accommodate all appointment requests. It is important that all patients try to keep to their appointment times as we run to a tight schedule. If you are late for an appointment, there may be a long wait before we can treat you.

AFTER TREATMENT IS FINISHED

At the end of your radiation therapy course, you will be given a discharge summary, indicating the approximate time frame for your follow-up assessment. You will also receive the details of the contact person closest to your home town. You may call this person if you have any concerns. Your local clinic will post you the appointment time for your follow-up assessment.

RADIATION ONCOLOGY PHONE NUMBERS

Main Reception ph (06) 350 8430 • LA1/3 Reception ph (06) 350 8142
• LA4 Reception ph (06) 350 8440