

Preparation for radiotherapy to the female pelvis

This information leaflet is about how to prepare for radiotherapy to your pelvis. Please follow this information from the day that you agree to have radiotherapy treatment. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

How do I prepare for my planning CT scan and radiotherapy treatment?

As part of the preparation for your radiotherapy treatment, you will have a planning computerised tomography (CT scan). This scan uses x-rays and a computer to create detailed images of the inside of your body. This will help us to identify normal and abnormal tissue, and plan your radiotherapy treatment.

For this CT scan and the following radiotherapy treatment, it is very important that you are well hydrated (drink lots of fluid) and have a 'comfortably full' bladder. A comfortably full bladder means your bladder feels full but that you do not have the urgency to empty it. Therefore, we ask that you drink 1.5 – 2 litres of fluid per day, especially water or other non-caffeinated drinks. Please reduce your intake of fizzy and alcoholic drinks.

To prepare, you can practise filling your bladder and keeping it full. We suggest you empty your bladder and drink 500ml (about two thirds of a pint) of water and try to hold it for 1 – 1.5 hours. By doing this every day, you will be well hydrated.

It is also important when you have your planning CT scan and treatment that you try and empty your bowels daily – being well hydrated will help you to do this. If you have been prescribed a laxative, it is important that you start taking these at least three days prior to your planning CT scan appointment.

Following these instructions will help reduce the side effects of your treatment because less of your bladder and bowel will be in the treatment area.

What if I can't hold it?

If you can't hold your bladder with 500ml and you need to pass water, try 400ml and again hold for 1 – 1.5 hours. If you still can't hold it, try decreasing the amount of fluid you drink until you find your comfortable amount. Aim to increase the volume of water daily until you are comfortable holding 500ml.

What happens when I arrive for my CT scan?

When you arrive for your CT scan a radiographer will explain the procedure and answer any questions you may have. For the CT scan and treatment we need you to hold only 350ml of

fluid in your bladder for 45 minutes. This is a little less than what you have been practising with and should therefore be quite manageable. A member of staff will tell you when to start drinking.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your radiotherapy, please contact the **Radiotherapy Department** on **020 7188 7188** (enter extension number **57542** or **57569**).

Guy's and St Thomas' hospitals offer a range of cancer-related information leaflets for patients and carers, available at www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/cancer-leaflets. For information leaflets on other conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets



Dimbleby Cancer Care provides cancer support services for Guy's and St Thomas'. We have a drop-in information area staffed by specialist nurses and offer complementary therapies, psychological support and benefits advice for patients and carers.

Dimbleby Cancer Care is located in the Welcome Village of the Cancer Centre at Guy's. **t:** 020 7188 5918 **e:** DimblebyCancerCare@gstt.nhs.uk

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the clinical nurse specialist or other member of staff caring for you or call our helpline.

t: 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

t: 020 7188 8801 (PALS) **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

t: 020 7188 3514 (complaints) **e:** complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

Language and Accessible Support Services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch:

t: 020 7188 8815 **e:** languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk

NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

t: 111

NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

w: www.nhs.uk

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