

Preparing for radiotherapy to the prostate

This information leaflet is about how to prepare for radiotherapy to the prostate. Please follow this information from the day that you consent to treatment.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask the nurse or doctor caring for you.

It is very important that you are well hydrated (drinking lots of fluid) and have a 'comfortably full' bladder for your CT scan and treatment. A comfortably full bladder means your bladder feels full but that you do not feel that you urgently need to empty it. Therefore we ask that you drink 1½ – 2 litres of fluid per day, especially water or other non-caffeinated drinks. Please reduce your intake of fizzy and alcoholic drinks.

A suggested way to keep hydrated is to drink a glass of water every one to two hours during the day time, more if the weather is hot or if you are exercising. Aim to drink six to eight glasses of water a day. It is also important when you have your planning CT scan and treatment that you try to empty your bowels daily – being well hydrated will help you to do this.

Following these instructions will help to reduce the side effects of your treatment because less of your bladder and bowel will be in the radiation beam. This will also make sure that your prostate is in the same position each day, ensuring that the treatment is accurate.

How do I prepare for my planning CT scan?

In addition to thinking about keeping yourself well hydrated, we need you to practice filling your bladder and keeping it full. We suggest that you empty your bladder and drink 350ml (approx two small glasses) of water. Ideally you should be able to hold your bladder for 45 minutes. Please do this everyday from the day you consent to treatment.

What if I am unable to hold it?

If you are unable to hold your bladder with 350ml and you need to pass water, try reducing the amount to 300ml and again hold for 45 minutes. If you still can't hold on, try decreasing the amount of fluid you drink until you find an amount of fluid that is comfortable for you to hold on for the full 45 minutes. Aim to increase the volume of water daily until you are comfortable holding 350ml.

What happens when I arrive for my CT appointment?

When you arrive for your CT scan a radiographer will have a chat with you to explain the procedure. For the CT scan and treatment we need you to hold 350ml of fluid in your bladder for 30 – 45 minutes. 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 (ext 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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