

Preparing your bladder for radiotherapy to the pelvis

This information sheet provides advice on how to prepare your bladder for radiotherapy to the pelvis. Please follow the advice below from the day that you consent to treatment.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to 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 that 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 daytime, or more if the weather is hot or if you are exercising. **Aim to drink six to eight glasses of water a day.**

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. It will also ensure that the treatment is delivered accurately.

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 (about two small glasses) of water. Ideally you should be able to hold it in your bladder for 45 minutes. Please do this every day from the day you consent to treatment.

What if I am unable to hold it in?

If you are unable to hold 350ml of water in your bladder and you need to pass urine (wee), try reducing the amount to 300ml and again holding it for 45 minutes. If you still can't hold it in, try decreasing the amount of fluid you drink until you find an amount that is comfortable for you to hold 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 explain the procedure to you. 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. Before the CT scan we will check that your bladder is full enough. If it is not, you may need to drink more water or come back another day.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your radiotherapy, please contact the **radiotherapy department** on **020 7188 7188** (enter extension **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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