

Preparing your rectum for radiotherapy

Your doctor has recommended that you undergo radiotherapy treatment. This leaflet explains how to prepare your rectum for radiotherapy using a type of medicine called a micro enema. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to your radiographer.

Why do I need to prepare my rectum?

You have had a CT scan to plan your radiotherapy. The CT scan showed that your rectum was large which meant that we were not able to plan your treatment. By using the micro enema to prepare your rectum, it will help move the rectum out of the treatment area. This will allow us to plan your treatment and reduce short and long term side effects.

What does the preparation involve?

A micro enema is used to make your rectum empty itself, either with a bowel movement or passing of wind. If you have already opened your bowels on the day of the scan, the use of the micro-enema is still necessary to ensure the rectum is empty.

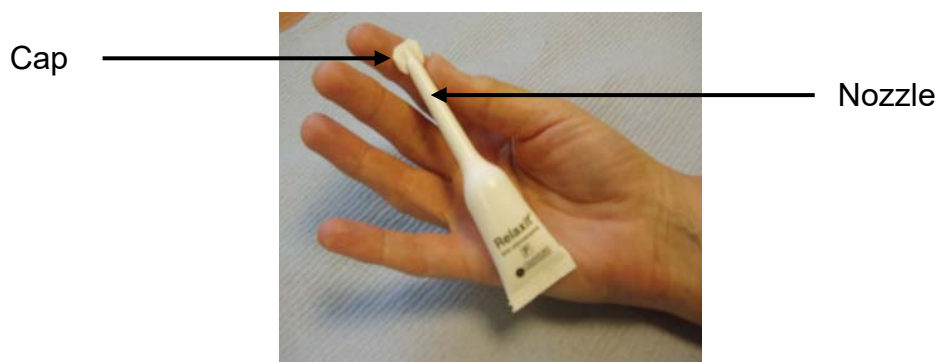


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The medication is inserted into your back passage through the nozzle (see above). You will be asked to do this yourself. Most patients find that they need to have a bowel movement within 15–20 minutes, with most needing to visit the toilet only once.

Using the micro enema

1. Go to the toilet and pull or twist off the cap from the end of the nozzle.
2. To make it easier to insert, squeeze out a drop of fluid from the tube and spread it over the nozzle.

3. Sit on the toilet and gently insert the nozzle fully into your back passage. Squeeze out all the contents and keep squeezing the tube as you remove the nozzle – this will prevent the medication from being drawn back into the nozzle.
4. It is OK to empty your bladder at this time if you need to.
5. Throw the empty tube into the bin.
6. Return to the waiting room and wait for 15–20 minutes or until you feel the urge to empty your bowels.
7. Go back into the toilet and try and empty your bowels. Please don't strain and don't worry if you cannot go or if only wind is passed – it may be that your bowel is already empty.

Please tell a member of staff once you have emptied your bowels and he or she will then tell you when to start drinking your water.

Preparation for treatment

You will need to repeat this procedure before every treatment. When you arrive each day, please do the bowel preparation and tell a member of staff when you have opened your bowels. They will then tell you when to start your drinking.

Although the thought of using a micro enema each day sounds unpleasant, research has shown that the use of an enema is beneficial and that patients tolerate it well. You will be given a prescription for a course of enemas to use during your treatment. Please bring one tube with you each day. If you are worried about any part of the preparation process, please discuss your concerns with one of the radiographers.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about preparing your rectum for radiotherapy, please contact the radiographers on **020 7188 3160** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

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

Get involved and have your say: become a member of the Trust

Members of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust contribute to the organisation on a voluntary basis. We count on them for feedback, local knowledge and support. Membership is free and it is up to you how much you get involved. To find out more, and to become a member:

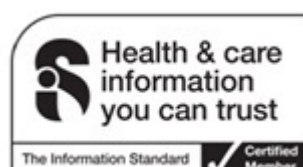
t: 0800 731 0319 **e:** members@gstt.nhs.uk **w:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership

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