

Radiotherapy for prostate cancer

This information is a daily treatment guide for patients having radiotherapy to their prostate at Mount Vernon Cancer Centre. If you have any questions or concerns please call the clinic radiographers (contact numbers overleaf).

There is a series of short videos about treatment for prostate cancer at Mount Vernon Cancer Centre. Go to www.ljmc.org and follow the links to patient information for prostate cancer.

Daily treatment guide

Please bring a dressing gown and slippers/slip-on shoes with you. If you do not have a dressing gown we can provide you with one to use for the whole of your treatment.

When you arrive please check in using either the check-in machine or the reception desk. If you are a private patient please check in at the Hal Gray Unit reception.

When you check in using the check-in machine, it will tell you on the screen which treatment machine you are booked on for that day. This may be different from the one on your printed list. This could be due to a routine service, or your treatment machine may be experiencing delays that day.

Once you have checked in, please go to the toilet and try to open your bladder and bowels. (You may have been given micro-enemas to use when you had your CT planning appointment). Try not to strain. If you can't pass anything or can only pass wind that's fine.

Have a seat in the waiting area for the treatment machine you are booked on. All the machines have their own waiting area.

If you are having any side effects or have any concerns please talk to the radiographers. They are here to help you.

You will have been told at your planning appointment if you need to have an empty or full bladder.

If you need a FULL bladder for your treatment

It is important you drink normally before you come for your radiotherapy.

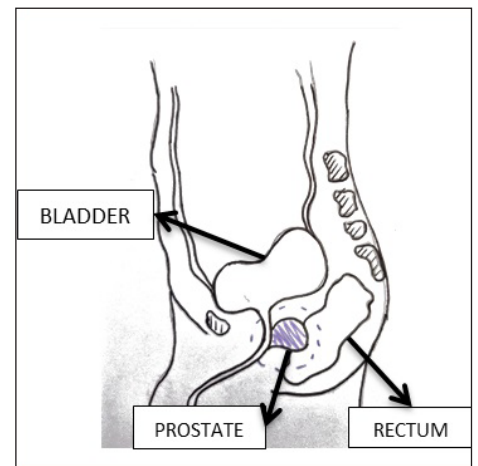
This ensures that you are not dehydrated, otherwise the fluid you drink for your radiotherapy will be absorbed into your body and will not fill your bladder. Give yourself enough time to ensure you are able to finish drinking your water before your appointment time.

If you haven't been able to open your bowels or your micro-enema has not worked or you feel bloated or gassy, please tell the radiographers.

The treatment radiographers will tell you when to drink your water (try to drink all the water within 5 minutes and the same amount as you did at your planning scan).

They will then ask you what time you finished drinking your water. You will have to wait the same amount of time as you did at your planning appointment to ensure your bladder becomes the same size as it was for your planning scan.

They will ask you to get changed into your gown and slippers in the changing room just before



they call you in for your treatment. Please take your belongings with you into the treatment room.

The importance of drinking water regularly

- An average adult's body consists of up to 65% of water.

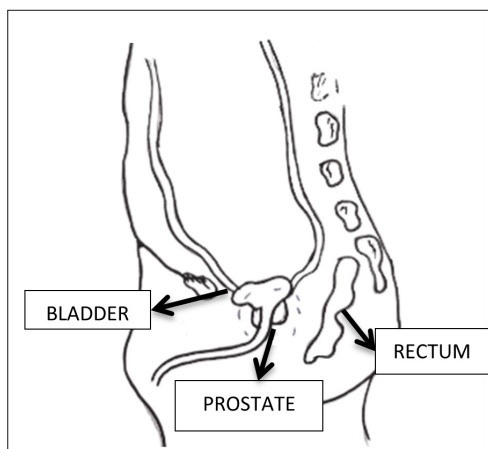
It is important to ensure you are drinking at least 1.5 litres of water a day whilst you are on treatment.

- Our bodies constantly absorb water. Therefore, if you were to come for treatment and drink your planned amount without having had enough water at home, your body would absorb this water for your vital organs leaving your bladder not ideally full.

We want you to drink water throughout the day, in order for the water you drink here to go straight to your bladder in time for treatment.

What happens when your bladder is too empty when drinking is required?

- The picture below shows the effects of having an empty bladder in the radiation field.



- This causes more of your bladder to be irradiated. We want to keep the dose to your bladder as low as possible to prevent side effects such as urinary incontinence and discomfort.
- Think of your bladder like a balloon: the bigger it is the less of it will be within the treatment field.

Do not start drinking your planned amount until staff have advised you to as there may be delays.

If you find that you **cannot hold your bladder** for your assigned time, consult with the staff on your machine and they will be able to advise or accommodate you on what to do.

If you need an EMPTY bladder for your treatment

Try to empty your bowels before you leave home.

Arrive **20 minutes before** your appointment time.

If you haven't been able to open your bowels or your micro-enema has not worked or you feel gassy or bloated, please tell the radiographers.

The radiographers will tell you when to empty your bladder. Please do not strain. If you have nothing to pass that's fine.

They will then ask you to get changed into your gown and slippers in the changing room just before they call you in for your treatment. Please take your belongings with you into the treatment room.

Contacts

Radiotherapy assistants .
07825 024683 or 07825 024170

If you have any specific requirements for your appointment times please let the radiotherapy assistants know **before** you start your treatment. Appointments are very difficult to change once you start treatment.

For radiotherapy issues or concerns:
Radiotherapy clinic radiographers
(Monday–Friday 08.00–16.30)
07825 024058

Emergency Contact
24 hour Acute Oncology Service
- Mount Vernon Cancer Centre:
07825 028855 or attend your
nearest Accident and Emergency
Department.