

# Beginning Radiation Therapy

## What to expect

Welcome to Radiation Therapy. Please read the following information to learn about daily treatments, weekly visits and lab visits.

### Daily treatment

After your planning session, you'll take a tour of the department and learn:

- How to check in.
- Where to change into a robe.
- Where to wait for your treatment.

### Checking in for radiation

When you arrive for your daily treatment in the Radiation Oncology department, you'll check in at our reception desk, then wait in our waiting room until we're ready to begin your treatment.

### Weekly visits with your doctor

At least 1 time a week, you'll meet with your doctor and nurse in an exam room to talk about your treatment.

Between weekly visits, you may talk with us about your treatments or ask questions about any side effects. Report any concerns to your radiation therapist or nurse.

### Lab work

Your doctor may order lab work (blood counts) for you.

- Let your nurse know if you're having your blood drawn at another clinic so we don't repeat the test.
- Let us know if you have a port or other central line. We'll schedule your blood draw in the IV therapy area.

### Resources

We have many resources available through our resource center and our support and education programs. You can also ask for help from any Cancer Care Center staff member.

### Phone number

If you have questions about your radiation therapy or concerns about side effects, call Radiation Therapy at **651-254-2039**.

## My radiation therapy treatment plan

Usually, knowing the exact timeline for your treatment is difficult. Creating a treatment plan helps you:

- Clarify information you need
- Identify your personal needs
- Decide what will be most meaningful for your desired quality of life
- Address fears and concerns

Figuring out the physical, emotional and spiritual support you want helps guide your treatment plan. Use Pages 39 and 40 of *Your Care Guide for Living with Cancer* to write notes while talking with your care team about the best treatment plan for you. Some questions you may want to ask include:

- What's the goal of my radiation therapy?
- What kind of radiation therapy will I receive?
- What are the benefits of this radiation therapy?
- What are the risks of this radiation therapy?

- What are the most likely side effects?
- How should I manage these side effects?
- How does radiation therapy affect my medicines?
- What over-the-counter medicine can I take during radiation therapy?
- What time will my radiation therapy be?
- How many weeks will I have radiation therapy?
- When does my treatment start?
- What do I eat or drink before a treatment?
- What labs or other tests do I need before I start radiation therapy?
- How do I schedule appointments?
- How do I know my radiation therapy is working?

