



## Preparing your bladder before radiotherapy

### Introduction

You have been referred for radiotherapy treatment. It is important for you to have a comfortably full bladder for your radiotherapy planning scan and each day for your radiotherapy treatment.

### Why do I need a comfortably full bladder?

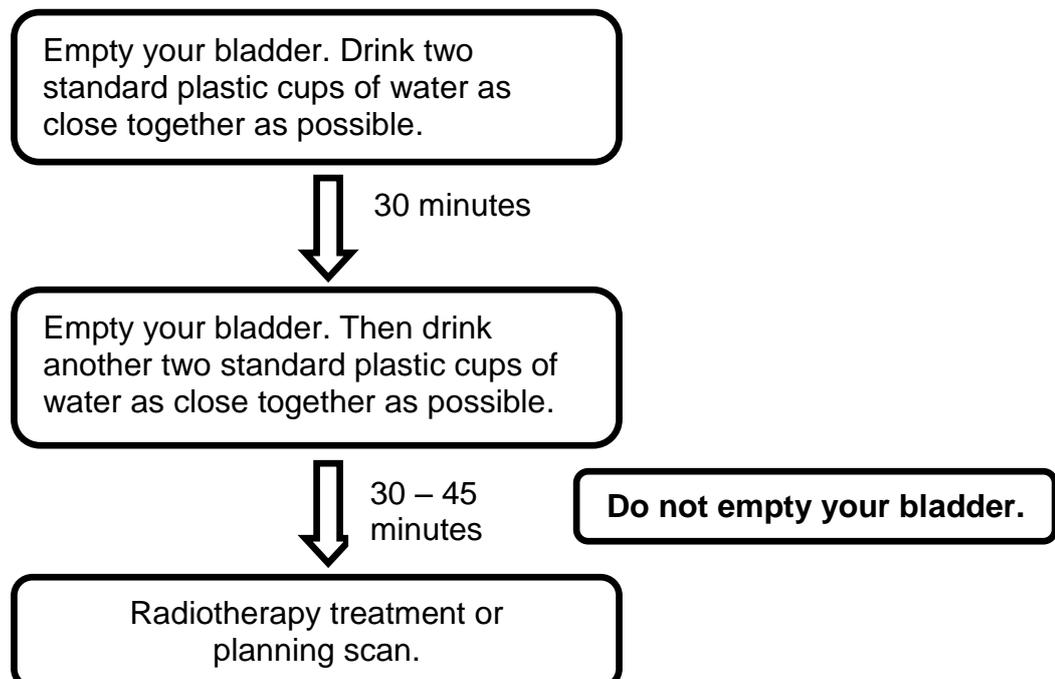
When your bladder is reasonably full it will push part of your small bowel out of the radiotherapy treatment area. This may reduce some of the side effects from the radiotherapy treatment and ensures that the treatment is accurate each day. So it is important to have your bladder comfortably full each day.

### How will I know when my bladder is comfortably full?

To be able to achieve a comfortably full bladder for your radiotherapy planning scan and treatment we would like you to practise at home. We suggest that you empty your bladder and then drink 300mls of water (two standard plastic cups) as close together as possible. After 30 minutes empty your bladder again and then drink a further 300mls (two standard plastic cups) as close together as possible.

See if you are still comfortable 45 minutes after you have finished drinking. Ideally, you should still be reasonably comfortable for another 30 minutes. This allows for any possible delays to your treatment and will reduce any anxiety you may experience.

### We suggest:



### What happens if I can't hold a full bladder?

Please do not worry. If you are not comfortable at the end of 45 minutes, then we suggest you try again on another day. See if you can hold the amount for 30 minutes after you have finished drinking.

Your ability to hold fluid will depend on how often you go to the toilet to pass urine. If you normally need to pass urine more often than two-hourly, then please tell your clinical team.

### **Should I change my drinking pattern during the day?**

We suggest you drink a total of two litres of fluid a day; this should keep you suitably hydrated.

### **What should I do at each appointment?**

Radiotherapy planning scan – when you come for the radiotherapy planning scan you will be asked to arrive one hour before your appointment time. You will be given a contrast drink. You will be asked to drink 300ml (two standard plastic cups) as close together as possible. After 30 minutes empty your bladder and then drink a further 300mls (two standard plastic cups) as close together as possible. You will be scanned approximately 30 minutes after your last drink.

Radiotherapy treatment – before each treatment you will need to prepare your bladder in the same way as you did for your radiotherapy planning scan, but with water instead of oral contrast. Please drink 300ml (two standard plastic cups) as close together as possible. After 30 minutes empty your bladder and then drink a further 300mls (two standard plastic cups) as close together as possible. Then wait approximately 30 minutes for your bladder to fill, before the treatment each day. You may find it easier to arrive for your appointment earlier and then begin drinking.

You can empty your bladder **after** you have had your treatment.

### **What happens if there are delays and I need to empty my bladder?**

If you cannot maintain a full bladder and need to empty it please inform one of the radiographers on your treatment machine. It may be necessary to start the process again.

### **Other information**

You will have scans during your treatment. These scans are to look at your position and make sure the radiotherapy is being given accurately. These scans will be reviewed to make sure your bladder is a similar size to when you had your radiotherapy planning scan. If your bladder is not of a similar size, the radiographers may ask you to change how much water or when you drink. However, they will discuss this with you.

The scans which are undertaken to plan your radiotherapy are solely aimed to give enough information to plan the radiotherapy accurately. These scans are not diagnostic and therefore do not give sufficient information to assess the status of your cancer or any other abnormalities.

If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

Contact The Christie Hotline for  
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**The Christie Hotline:  
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We try to ensure that all our information given to patients is accurate, balanced and based on the most up-to-date scientific evidence. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact **patient.information@christie.nhs.uk**

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