

## Preparing for radiotherapy to the prostate

### Why do I need to prepare for my planning scan and treatment?

Opening your bowels regularly, especially before the planning scan and each daily treatment, means that the shape of your rectum and the position of your prostate remains the same. If your rectum is full with faeces and / or gas during treatment, the position of the prostate can change making it difficult to accurately target the radiotherapy.

### How do I prepare for my scan and treatment?

Following these steps will help you to have an empty rectum when you are having your planning scan and treatment. Please follow these instructions carefully.

- Avoid foods or drinks that you know will produce gas in you for 2 to 3 days before you come for your planning appointment and throughout your radiotherapy treatment. This could include fizzy drinks e.g. cola and beer; beans and pulses; green leafy vegetables e.g. broccoli and sprouts and other vegetables such as onions.
- Avoid chewing gum.
- Avoid eating and drinking at the same time as this encourages you to swallow air.
- Try to eat food slowly and not rush.
- Eat your meals as normal and do not skip meals. You do not have to 'starve' before your scan or treatment but remember the above advice.
- Continue to take your usual medication.
- Try to empty your bowels on the morning of your planning scan appointment and if possible daily before each radiotherapy treatment session.
- If you do not routinely open your bowels daily or if you have any questions about these instructions, please contact the specialist radiographer on **0161 918 2096**.

### What do I do during treatment?

During the weeks of treatment the aim is to try to keep your bowel habit, and so the size of your rectum, constant. To do this you need to continue the diet you started before the scan until you start to develop symptoms caused by the radiotherapy. These commonly are: a feeling of wanting to open your bowels when there is nothing there, increased wind, increased frequency of opening your bowels and a change in the nature of the stools. When this happens you should discuss a change in your diet with your doctor or radiographer who may advise you to decrease the fibre in your diet and/or start taking fybogel.

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.

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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