

## For further information and advice contact:

The Christie in Withington radiotherapy reception team -  
**0161 446 8177**

The Christie at Oldham review team - **0161 918 7700**

The Christie at Salford review team - **0161 918 7800**

Proton therapy team - **0161 918 7577**

The Christie Hotline - **0161 446 3658**

For urgent support and specialist advice

Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The Christie Private Care - **0161 918 7991**

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.

The Christie is committed to producing high quality, evidence based information for patients. Our patient information adheres to the principles and quality statements of the Information Standard. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact **[the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net](mailto:the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net)**

For information and advice visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham or Salford. Opening times can vary, please check before making a special journey.

Contact The Christie Hotline for urgent support and specialist advice  
**The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658**  
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Radiotherapy department

## How to use micro-enemas

You will be prescribed micro-enemas to use before your radiotherapy planning scan, and daily before each radiotherapy treatment, in order to empty your rectum.

These will be supplied to you by The Christie on prescription in the post or on arrival to the department.

This allows us to be more accurate in delivering your radiotherapy and reduce the amount of your rectum that we treat. Research has shown that it is beneficial and generally has no serious side effects.

You may be advised to use these at home not more than 2 hours before your scan/radiotherapy appointment is due.

You should use the enema even if you have opened your bowels that day as it will make sure the rectum is completely empty. You may only pass a small amount of motion or wind. This is normal.

### How to use the enema:

- Try to empty your bladder before using the enema.
- Pull or twist off the cap.
- Use a drop of the liquid to smear on the nozzle to act as a lubricant.



- If you have been advised to use your enema at home before attending, the preferred position to insert the enema is lying on your left hand side with your knees slightly tucked towards your chest. If you are using the enema in the hospital it may not be possible to use this position, however the effectiveness of the enema will not be compromised.
- Gently insert the full length of the nozzle into your rectum and gently squeeze until it is empty.
- Keep squeezing the tube as you pull it back out of the rectum. This stops the liquid being drawn back into the tube.
- If you are able to try to remain on your side to allow the liquid to absorb in the rectum. Try to do this for a few minutes.
- Throw the tube away and wash your hands.
- Wait for 15 minutes or until you feel that you need to have your bowels open and then go to the toilet to open your bowels and empty your bladder.
- If there is a delay in delivering your radiotherapy and you opened your bowels more than 2 hours before treatment, you may be asked to use a second enema. Please bring a spare one with you each day.

**Micro-enemas are safe to use unless you are allergic to:**

- Sodium citrate
- Sodium laurel sulphate
- Sorbitol
- Glycerol

Or you have inflammatory bowel disease such as Crohn's disease or Ulcerative Colitis.

## Frequently asked questions

**What are the side effects of using this medication for longer periods of time?**

With long term use they can cause diarrhoea and reduced absorption of vitamins into the body. However, the maximum duration that you will be using the micro-enemas is 2 - 4 weeks. If you develop diarrhoea during treatment, then let your treating radiographer know.

**Will I need to use the micro-enema for the whole of my treatment?**

The micro-enema should be used daily throughout your treatment. They may be stopped earlier by your specialist team if you have developed diarrhoea as a result of the radiotherapy or painful inflammation in the rectum (proctitis).

**Can I use micro-enemas if I am on Warfarin?**

Yes, micro-enemas are safe to use if you are on Warfarin. Gently insert the nozzle into the rectum to avoid any trauma. If you have any bleeding after you have used the micro-enema please let your specialist team know. There are no drug interactions with Warfarin.

**Can I use micro-enemas if I have haemorrhoids or an anal fissure?**

Yes. Gently insert the nozzle into the rectum to avoid any trauma. If you have bleeding after you have used them, please let your specialist team know.

**Will micro-enemas affect my other medication?**

No - the ingredients in the micro-enema are not likely to be absorbed, and there are no reported interactions with other medication.