

Prostate High Dose Rate (HDR) Brachytherapy Post-treatment Instructions

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Important info for after brachytherapy treatment

1. There is no radiation left in your body after this treatment. No radiation protection measures are needed.
2. You may go back to having **intercourse** (sex) as soon as you are comfortable.
3. You don't need to follow a **diet** unless you are having problems. The most important things to stay away from are citrus juices (e.g. orange juice), spicy foods, coffee, tea, pop, and vitamin C. These foods can irritate (bother) the bladder and cause burning with urination (peeing) or the urgent need to urinate (pee).
4. Don't get **constipated** in the next month. Pushing or straining to have a bowel movement may make prostate swelling worse and cause problems when urinating. Milk of Magnesia, fibre, prunes, Metamucil®, and stool softeners (e.g., Colace®) can all help to prevent constipation.
5. **Tamsulosin (Flomax®)** helps improve your urine flow. If your stream gets slow, hard to start, or if you feel like you are not emptying your bladder, contact your radiation oncologist. Do not stop this medication without speaking with your radiation oncologist or nurse.
6. You may see bruising or discoloration on your scrotum in the next few days. It may turn dark blue or purple. This will not usually be painful. It is caused by a small amount of bleeding under the skin when the needles are inserted (put in). Don't worry. It will clear up over a few days.
7. **Infection** can happen after brachytherapy. This is rare. If you have a fever or chills after brachytherapy, **contact your family doctor or radiation oncologist immediately, or go to the Emergency Department.** Take your temperature before calling if you can.

What are your questions? Please ask.
We are here to help you.

8. If you can't pass your urine, go to the nearest Emergency Department and have a catheter put in. Call your radiation oncologist the next day. You will have to wait until the swelling goes down before having the catheter removed. This usually doesn't take very long, typically a few days.
9. Avoid lifting any heavy things for 1 week after brachytherapy.
10. If you have questions or concerns, call the QEII Cancer Care Program nursing line at 902-473-6067.

DO NOT have surgery on your prostate, including transurethral resection of the prostate (or 'turp'), to help with urination. talk to your radiation oncologist if you can't urinate.

What can I do after my operation?

- Rest quietly today.
- Drink lots of fluids (water is best).
- Do not drive a car or operate machinery for 24 hours.
- Do not sign any legal documents or important papers for 24 hours.
- Do not drink alcohol for 24 hours.
- You should not be responsible for small children or be a main caregiver.

Important information about medications

1. Tamsulosin (Flomax®)

Your radiation oncologist will advise you on when to take this and how often.

Effects:

- Helps improve the flow of urine, allowing for better emptying of the bladder.
- Lessens the need to urinate often and urgently.

Side effects:

- This medication may lower your blood pressure. You may feel light-headed or dizzy, especially when standing up after sitting or lying down. This is not common.
- If you feel light-headed or dizzy, you should tell a doctor and have your blood pressure checked.

2. Antibiotics

You will get antibiotics during the implant procedure to lower the chance of infection. Your radiation oncologist may talk with you about taking antibiotics after the procedure.

3. Pain medications

You may have pain after brachytherapy, which is likely to be mild (not intense). Tylenol may help if you need pain medication. Tylenol® with Codeine No. 3 has codeine in it, which may cause constipation, so avoid it unless absolutely needed.

Anti-inflammatory medications like **ibuprofen** (e.g., Advil®, Motrin®) or **meloxicam** can be helpful for pain and for problems urinating. If you have problems with your stomach (including ulcers) or kidneys, please talk to your family doctor or radiation oncologist before taking these medications.

Looking for more health information?

Find this brochure and all our patient resources here: <http://library.nshealth.ca/PatientGuides>
Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.
For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

*Nova Scotia Health Authority promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.
Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!*

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The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.
If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider. The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.

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