

# Radiation Therapy: Full Bladder Instructions

## Why is it important to have a full bladder for my treatments and simulation marking appointment?

Some organs in your pelvis move and change position depending on the size and shape of your bladder. When your bladder is very full compared to when it is very empty, a lot of changes can take place in your pelvis that may have an effect on your treatments. It is important that your bladder is **about the same size** every day for treatment as it was the day you had your marking appointment.

Your cancer care team will explain why it is important to have a full bladder for your treatments and simulation marking appointment.

## How do I ensure I have a full bladder for my treatments and simulation marking appointment?

The following instructions should help you maintain a bladder with about the same fullness every day:

- **45 minutes before your appointment, empty your bladder.**
- **Drink 500 mL of water right away.**
- **Do not empty your bladder until after your treatment is over.**
- **Do not drink any other fluids while you are waiting for treatment.**

If you have difficulty holding your bladder full for 45 minutes, please tell a member of the staff.

## Does the 500 mL of liquid have to be water?

Yes, it is best that the 500 mL of liquid be water.

## What if I cannot hold my full bladder until my treatment?

Often it is difficult to keep your bladder full until your appointment time. This can happen if the machine you are being treated on is running a little behind. Try to hold your bladder full for treatment, but if you cannot, check in at the reception desk and then empty your bladder to relieve your discomfort. The staff at the reception desk will notify the therapists who are treating you. Someone from the radiation therapy team will come and let you know when to fill your bladder back up with more water and when they will take you in for your appointment.

**Questions you may want to ask your Cancer Care Team:**

- Why do I need to have my bladder full for treatment every day?
- How much water do I need to drink and how soon before my appointment?
- Who do I speak to if I can't hold my bladder full until my appointment?

Please visit the following link for a video about having a full bladder: <https://vimeo.com/229592469>



**Patient and family feedback is very important to us.**

**We would like to invite you to send any comments or suggestions on how to improve this booklet to [education.cancercare@nshealth.ca](mailto:education.cancercare@nshealth.ca) or feel free to call us at 1-866-599-2267.**

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*It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider.*

*If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.*