

HDR Brachytherapy for Gynecological Cancers

This pamphlet will guide you on what to expect over the next few days and offers tips on how to care for yourself at home after your brachytherapy treatment.

How to care for yourself

- Rest quietly today.
- If you have been given medicine to relax you or if you were put to sleep, over the next 24 hours do not:
 - › Drive
 - › Run a machine (like a lawn mower)
 - › Drink alcohol
 - › Sign any legal papers
 - › Take care of small children or be a main caregiver

Possible side effects

- Pain
 - › You may have period-like cramps for a few hours. Medicines like acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or may help.
- Bleeding
 - › You may have some light bleeding or discharge from the vagina when you go home. Use a sanitary pad. Do not use tampons or menstrual cups. The bleeding or discharge should get less over the next few days.
- Passing urine
 - › You may have a burning feeling when you pass urine. This may be from the catheter that was put in during the treatment. Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water the day after your treatment. If you continue to have burning or a hard time passing urine after a few days, call your doctor.
- Bowel Movements
 - › You may notice a change in your usual pattern of bowel movements. This may be caused by radiation.

- Sexual Activity
 - › You should avoid sexual activity once you start your brachytherapy treatments. You may return to sexual activity two weeks after your brachytherapy treatments are finished. If you are having pain, large amounts of bleeding or signs of an infection, continue to avoid sexual activity and contact your radiation therapy team.

Go to the Emergency room if you have any of these side effects:

- Fever – a temperature over 38.5°C or 101°F
- A hard time passing urine
- Heavy vaginal bleeding – soaking a pad every hour
- Severe stomach pain

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 or feel free to call us at 1-866-599-2267.

*Prepared by: Nova Scotia Health Cancer Care Program
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This pamphlet is for educational purposes only.

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.