

# Radiation Therapy: What You Need to Know About Your Appointments

This pamphlet should answer most questions you may have about your radiation therapy appointments and help you plan for your treatments.

## **Where will I get my radiation treatments?**

Depending on where you live, your Radiation Therapy is provided at one of the two Cancer Centres in Nova Scotia:

- QEII Cancer Care Centre is located at the Dickson Building, VG site, QEII in Halifax; or
- Cape Breton Cancer Centre is located at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital in Sydney.

## **How will I find out when my first treatment is?**

Before you start your treatments, you will need to have a Simulation (markings) appointment. You will be notified of your appointment time for your Simulation. This appointment is needed to plan your treatments. After the Simulation, and when your treatment plan is ready, you will be notified of the day and time of your first radiation treatment.

## **What will happen on my first day of treatment?**

When you arrive at the Cancer Centre, you will need to register at the reception desk. You will be given an identification tag/bracelet that you will wear every day while you are in the Radiation Therapy Department. You may also have your picture taken.

You will take a seat in the waiting room and a Radiation Therapist will bring you in for treatment. Other patients will be in the waiting room with you.

If you need to change into a hospital gown for your treatment, you will be shown to a changing area and told what to do with your belongings.

## **Will my appointments be at the same time every day?**

Your appointments may not be at the same time every day due to the number of patients getting treatment. Let the clerks at reception know of any concerns you have about your appointments, including problems with childcare, work, transportation, or other medical appointments. The clerks will try to schedule you as requested but it is often not possible to meet all requests.

### **Where can I stay if I live a distance from the hospital?**

Most patients will have several days or even weeks of treatment. If you want to reduce travel, and live 50 kilometers or more from the Cancer Centre, tell the clerk who calls you with your first appointment . They can make a reservation for you at:

- › The Lodge that Gives, Point Pleasant Lodge, or The Lord Nelson Hotel & Suites (Halifax)
- › Holy Redeemer Centre (Sydney)

### **Can I have my appointments early on Friday and late on Monday?**

Many patients who come for treatment live far from the Cancer Centre. They are often away from their families from Monday to Friday. The booking clerk will try to give patients who have long distances to travel an early appointment on Friday and a late appointment on Monday so they can travel home for the weekend. If you need to travel for the weekend, please let the booking clerks know so they can try to accommodate this request.

### **When do I see my Radiation Oncologist and Nurse?**

You will be scheduled for appointments with your Oncology Nurse and/or Radiation Oncologist throughout your treatment. These added appointments will be listed with your treatment schedule. On the days you have this added appointment, you will need to wait in the waiting room after your treatment. Be prepared to stay longer in the clinic than usual. You will be assessed by a member of your radiation oncology team weekly.

If you have a new symptom or concern, you can ask to be seen even if you do not have a scheduled appointment.

### **What should I do if I cannot make my appointment?**

If you are unable to come for treatment for any reason (e.g., bad weather, family emergency, illness, etc.), please call to let us know:

- › Halifax: 902-473-6008
- › Sydney: 902-567-8100

If treatments do get missed, they may be added on at the end of your treatment schedule. Your Radiation Oncologist will review your treatment plan and adjust the number of treatments as needed.

For more information, visit the Nova Scotia Health Cancer Care Program website at [www.nscancercare.ca](http://www.nscancercare.ca).

*Prepared by: NSH Central Zone Radiation Therapy Team  
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*It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider.  
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