

Information About the Guarantee for all Radiation Therapy Patients



Nova Scotia Cancer Care Program

www.nscancercare.ca

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Eight-week Radiation Therapy Guarantee

Being told you have cancer is difficult. Thankfully, the cancer care teams at Nova Scotia's cancer centres are highly skilled and experienced at what they do. And they're here to help.

The Province of Nova Scotia is also aware of the challenges you face. They know that starting your radiation therapy treatment as soon as possible is important. That's why they've made a promise to everyone in Nova Scotia:

If you have cancer and need radiation therapy, no more than eight weeks will pass before you start your treatment.

It's an eight-week Guarantee. And it starts the moment your Radiation Oncologist and you agree that you are ready to start your treatment.

What is the Guarantee?

Simply put, if you have cancer and need radiation therapy, no more than eight weeks will pass from the time you are ready-to-treat to start-of-treatment. Our top priority is to make sure that you are treated as soon as possible.

Think of the Guarantee as a safety net. In all likelihood, you'll start your treatment much sooner than eight weeks. The Guarantee is in place to make sure that you do not wait any longer.

You'll probably have your radiation therapy treatment in one of Nova Scotia's two cancer centres:

- the QEII Cancer Care Program in Halifax, or
- the Cape Breton Cancer Centre in Sydney.

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

In the unlikely event that you cannot be treated within eight weeks at the facility where you were referred, we will offer you the option to be treated at the other cancer centre in Nova Scotia or, if need be, at a cancer centre in Atlantic Canada, or elsewhere in Canada or the United States. The important thing to remember is that you will be given the option to receive treatment within eight weeks.

What do ready-to-treat and start-of-treatment mean?

Ready-to-treat is when the Radiation Oncologist and you agree that you are ready to start your treatment. The Radiation Oncologist will decide if you are medically ready, given your health and the treatment you need. You might need other types of treatment besides radiation therapy, such as chemotherapy.

You will decide if you are personally ready. For example, you may choose to delay the start of your treatment in order to attend an important family event. In a case like this, you are deciding that you are not personally ready.

Start-of-treatment is exactly that. It's when you start your treatment - your first highenergy radiation treatment session, using the linear accelerators.

Keep in mind you will have appointments leading up to your first treatment session – such as your simulation session – that should not be confused with start-of-treatment.

Who will set up this Guarantee for me?

Once you and your Radiation Oncologist agree that you are ready-to-treat, your Oncologist will speak with you about the treatment you need, including the Guarantee timeframe. In all likelihood, you will start your treatment before your Guarantee date at the facility where you were referred. In the unlikely event that this can't happen, members of your cancer care team will discuss your options with you.

What do I need to do?

Nothing, just be informed. It's the cancer care team's responsibility to stay on top of your treatment plan, and make sure you start your treatment as soon as possible.

For more information, please call:

The QEII Cancer Care Program in Halifax, NS (902) 473-6000

The Cape Breton Cancer Centre in Sydney, NS (902) 567-8100

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Find this brochure and all our patient resources here: <http://library.nshealth.ca/PatientGuides>
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For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

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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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