

# RADIOTHERAPY

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## ■ Important information for you

About half of the patients who have cancer undergo radiotherapy. The radiation used is invisible and painless. Its aim is to destroy the cancer cells.

The treatment will be adapted to your specific needs. In general it lasts from about two to seven weeks. Sessions are scheduled from Monday to Friday and take a few minutes.

The radio-oncology team is composed of doctors, nurses, physicists and technicians. Before you begin your treatment, you will have a consultation with the radio-oncology doctor. The next stage in your medical care is to have a radiotherapy planning session, when a scanner is used in order to ensure that the cancer is targeted as precisely as possible. The images obtained make it possible to calculate precisely the trajectory of the radiation. This examination may take a long time; have some tranquillizing or analgesic medication with you. The actual radiotherapy sessions will take place following the initial planning session and are much shorter, only lasting a few minutes.

The side effects of this form of therapy vary from one patient to another. They will depend on the dose of radiation administered, the localization of the treatment and your body's reactions. They will appear several days or several weeks after the beginning of your treatment and take the same amount of time to disappear once it is over. The most frequent side effect is a local inflammation of the skin and the mucus membrane.

## Procedure for each session

### At home

Do not put any cream or lotion on your skin for two hours before the radiation session.

### In the radiotherapy room

You will be placed on the radiotherapy table in a specific position which will always be the same. You must stay quite still. The part of your body to be treated will be uncovered as for a normal x-ray.

You will be alone in the room during treatment, but you will be in constant audio-visual contact with the staff by means of an interphone and a camera. The room will be lit throughout the session.

## + INFO

Receiving radiation doesn't make you radioactive. There is no danger of radioactivity for you or those around you.

### Some advice

- ▶ Wash the radiated portion of your body with water and, if necessary, with a PH-neutral soap. Pat yourself dry without rubbing. Avoid using toilet water, perfume or deodorant on the treated area.
- ▶ Wear loose-fitting, comfortable, natural-fibre clothing. Synthetic textiles can cause irritation.
- ▶ Avoid exposure to sunlight during your treatment. After treatment protect the irradiated part for one year with a total sunblock. Follow the advice of the medical care team in choosing a suitable cream.
- ▶ The radio-oncology team is there to support you and to answer your questions during treatment.
- ▶ If you are tired, anxious or in pain, the nurses will suggest relaxing massage or reflexology sessions. A dietician attached to the service will adapt your diet if need be.



This card was translated by



### N. B.

The brochure, *Traitement par radiothérapie, des réponses à vos questions* [Radiotherapy treatment, your questions answered], which you will receive at your first appointment.



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