

Planning for Prostate Cancer Radiation Treatment

If you have any questions, please talk with your physician.

You and your physician have chosen radiation therapy as part of your treatment for prostate cancer. You will need a computed tomography (CT) simulation planning session before you start radiation treatment. CT simulation will give your care team the information they need about the exact location, size and shape of the prostate tumor. This handout will give you information about what you need to do prepare and what to expect at the CT simulation planning session.

Your session is scheduled for:

Date _____ Time _____

How to prepare for CT simulation

It is important to follow these instructions for the best outcome. Your bowel should be as empty as possible before your session. This will help get better film images of the area for planning purposes.

Pharmacy items

You will need to buy the following items over-the-counter from the pharmacy:

- Bisacodyl (Dulcolax®) laxative
- Fleet's® enema
- Simethicone (Gas-X®)

Diet 48 hours before your session

Do not eat high-fiber foods including fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds and beans.

Take 1 Dulcolax (laxative) tablet. This laxative is optional and may help you empty your bowel.

Diet 8 hours before your session

Start a clear liquid diet. Clear liquids include:

- Black coffee
- Water
- Tea
- Broth
- Jell-O®
- Gatorade®

Bowel prep in the evening before your session

- Take 1 Dulcolax (laxative) tablet at 5 pm. This laxative is optional and may help you empty your bowel.
- Use 1 Fleet's enema to clean your bowel. (You will do this again in the morning.)

Bowel prep in the morning

Use the 2nd Fleet's enema.

2 to 3 hours before the session

Take 1 tablet of Gas-X to relieve bloating.

30 minutes before the session

Drink 3 to 4 glasses (8 ounces each) of water. Your bladder should be full for the CT planning session.

Arriving at the CT planning session

Come to the Northwestern Memorial Hospital Radiation Oncology Department in the lower level of Galter Pavilion, 675 North Saint Clair Street in Chicago, 15 minutes before your appointment time.

What to expect during the CT planning session

The CT planning session will take about 1 hour.

The radiation therapist will make a mold of your lower body. The mold is like a large flat beanbag that is inflated and forms the shape of your body as it hardens. It will be used to hold your body in the same position for each treatment.

Once the mold is made, you will lie in the mold and a CT therapist will take a CT scan of you in the treatment position. If the CT scan shows that the rectum is not empty enough, they will ask you to use the restroom to expel as much stool and/or gas as possible. Then they will do another CT scan.

After the CT imaging is done, the therapist will mark your skin with tiny, pinpoint tattoos. You may feel a pin prick sensation when you get the tattoos. The tattoos show the care team where to set up your treatment site(s).

The therapist will take photos to document the treatment set-up, as well as a photo of your face for identification purposes.

The care team will talk with you about the possible side effects of radiation treatment. This will take about 15 to 30 minutes after the CT planning is done.

Before you leave, the therapist will give you the date and time to return for your 1st treatment.

If you have any questions, please ask your care team.