

Testes

The testicles are close to the radiotherapy beam. It is possible that this could result in sterility, but cannot be relied upon as a method of contraception. It is very unlikely that the male sex hormone (testosterone) will be affected by the radiotherapy.

Erectile dysfunction (ED) Radiotherapy can damage the blood vessels controlling erection, affecting your ability to achieve and maintain an erection. You can be referred to the ED Nurse to discuss treatment options if you wish.

Skin

The skin may become sore and reddened towards the end of the course of radiotherapy. Moisturising cream can be applied to the reddened areas. Your skin is closely monitored during treatment.

Parking during Treatment

You will be given a parking permit to use in one of the radiotherapy parking spaces; this must be returned at the end of the course of radiotherapy.

Post Radiotherapy

If you need any assistance after radiotherapy has finished, please contact:

Macmillan Radiographer **01803 654273**
Urology Nurse Specialist **01803 656193/654578**

For further information there are booklets available **FREE OF CHARGE FROM Macmillan Cancer Support**
Free phone 0808 808 00 00



**PATIENT
INFORMATION**

Cancer of the Bladder (Male)

Radiotherapy information for Torbay
Hospital patients

Introduction

The following information is not intended to be comprehensive, but should give you an idea of what to expect during and soon after your radiotherapy treatment here at Torbay.

General Principles of Radiotherapy

Radiotherapy means the delivery of powerful x-ray beams to a carefully defined area of the body containing a cancer or from where the cancer has been removed.

The type of radiotherapy you will receive is called “external beam”. This means that the radiation is delivered from a machine, which generates x-rays, a “linear accelerator”. The radiation is only produced when the machine is turned on so once your treatment is finished you do not become radioactive.

Arrangements for your Radiotherapy

It is very important that we can target the radiotherapy as accurately as possible. To this end, a CT scan with you lying in the same position as for the radiotherapy itself, enables us to locate the area to be treated. A catheter may need to be passed to show up your bladder. You will also be asked to empty your bladder before the scan

You will have some small tattoos placed on your skin, with your consent. These are used to help reproduce your position accurately during treatment. If you do not wish to have these marks, then the radiographers will discuss other options plus the additional responsibilities on your part to ensure temporary marks are not lost.

Photographs/electronic images will also be acquired, with your consent. These will be kept in your notes or stored electronically.

Treatment Details

Treatment is given daily Monday to Friday but not at weekends. Extra treatments may be arranged if days are missed due to

machine breakdown. There will be 20 treatments in total, each lasting approximately 15 minutes.

Images will be taken with the linear accelerator during treatment to check on your position.

Side Effects

Radiotherapy will affect some of your normal tissues.

You may feel tired, you are unlikely to feel sick and you will not lose your hair. The bladder, rectum (lower bowel), small bowel and testes may be affected as follows:

Rectum

A small area will receive a high dose of radiation. This usually results in a temporary inflammation, causing you to pass small, frequent motions; occasionally blood is passed. Medication can be given to ease these symptoms during treatment and they should pass off within a month of completing radiotherapy. Rarely the rectum is damaged permanently and surgery may be required.

Bladder

The bladder will receive a high dose of radiation, resulting in irritation of the bladder, causing you to pass urine more frequently. Let us know if this happens as we need to exclude an infection. There are some treatments that can ease these symptoms, which should pass off within a month of completing radiotherapy. Rarely the bladder is damaged permanently, resulting in the passage of small amounts of blood and an inability to hold onto much urine.

Small bowel

Any small bowel in the radiation field will cause you to have diarrhoea, possibly with some cramping abdominal pains. Anti-diarrhoeal medication can help in this situation. This should pass off within a month of completing radiotherapy. It is unusual to experience any permanent damage.