

Information for patients receiving

**Radiotherapy Treatment
to their Breast Buds**



Radiotherapy treatment to your breast buds

This leaflet is for patients who will have radiotherapy to their breast buds (nipple area). It is used to prevent enlargement of the male breast tissue (gynaecomastia) and breast pain (mastalgia) in patients with prostate cancer, being treated with hormone therapy.

It describes:

- The radiotherapy planning and treatment.
- The effects that you may experience during and after treatment.
- How best to cope with these effects.
- Who to contact if you have any questions or concerns.

If you are in any doubt about anything or have any questions or problems, please let us know as soon as possible.

Treatment Planning

Before your radiotherapy begins, the treatment must be planned by your doctor and radiographers.

Your radiographers will check some details with you, and show you into one of our markup rooms. They will ask you to undress to the waist and lie on your back. They will maintain your dignity whenever possible.

Your doctor will use a plastic template and a pen to mark the area around your nipple. Your radiographers will use these pen marks each day you come for treatment. It is therefore helpful if you can keep the marks on until your treatment has finished. We will put some clear stickers over them so they don't wash off. You can still bathe or shower while wearing these stickers. Your radiographers will also take photographs and measurements of the treatment area just in case the marks do come off.

You will start your treatment a few days after this appointment.

Treatment

You will have your treatment on a machine called a Linear Accelerator. The staff operating these machines are called therapy radiographers. We have both male and female staff. They will explain everything to you before treatment starts.

Linear Accelerator



Your radiographers will show you into the treatment room. They will ask you to take your top things off and lie on the treatment couch. The machine comes close to you but does not touch you. When your radiographers have everything positioned correctly, they will leave the room and switch the machine on. They watch you carefully from outside the room on close circuit TV. The treatment is painless and takes around 10 minutes. You will feel no different afterwards.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Effects of Treatment

The effects of treatment vary from one person to another. Therefore the information given here is intended as a general guide. Your doctor, nurse specialist or radiographer will explain your treatment to you.

Skin: Your skin in the treatment area may become sensitive, pink or itchy soon after completing your treatment. You may bath or shower as normal during treatment, but don't have the water too hot (lukewarm). You may use your own soap during treatment unless it begins to cause you discomfort.

Avoid exposing the treatment area to sunshine during treatment. This area will always be much more sensitive to the sun. You will need to be especially careful for the first year after your treatment has finished. We advise you to use sunscreen with both UVA/UVB protection and minimum SPF 50 when out in the sun.

Remember, radiotherapy only affects the area of your body being treated.

After treatment ends

Any symptoms that have developed because of the treatment will gradually settle down. Remember, the full benefits of your treatment may take a number of weeks to be felt. It may be a little while before you notice any improvement.

Where can I get help?

Many people have already had a lot of information and support from their own prostate cancer or Macmillan Nurse Specialist at another hospital or in the community. Remember that they can also help you with any worries or concerns at this time, and because you know them already, they can provide invaluable help and support during and after your treatment. So please remember to give them a call if you need to.

Information & Support

All our staff are here to make sure your treatment goes as smoothly as possible and will try to help with any questions or problems you may have. Further specialist help and information in the Beatson is available from:

Information and Support Radiographer ☎ **0141 301 7427**

The Macmillan Information & Support Centre is on Level 1 at the main entrance of the Beatson. They offer emotional support, information and signposting to services within and near to the Beatson and in your own local area. Open Monday to Friday 8:15am to 4:15pm. ☎ **0141 301 7390**

The Beatson Cancer Centre has a **Radiotherapy Advice Line** available for patients who have completed treatment. This is an answer phone service, available Monday – Friday. Please leave your name, date of birth and telephone number and a radiographer will call you back as soon as possible.

☎ **0141 301 7432**

The Cancer Centre also has a **Cancer Treatment Helpline for urgent calls**. This is for patients on or within 6 weeks of treatment who have urgent or severe symptoms such as -

- Shivering or flu-like symptoms.
- Temperature greater than 37.5°C.
- Gum/nose bleeds or unusual bruising.
- Worsening or sudden breathlessness.
- Leg weakness/difficulty walking.
- Severe nausea/vomiting/diarrhoea/constipation.
- Sudden increased or uncontrolled pain.
- Other concerning symptoms associated with your cancer treatment.

The line is available 24 hours for emergencies, although it would be helpful if you called early in the day if this is at all possible.

For Urgent Calls:

Beatson 8am-8pm ☎ 0141 301 7990

National 8pm-8am ☎ 0800 917 7711

Counselling & Clinical Psychology

This leaflet deals with the physical aspects of your treatment, but your emotional well-being is just as important to us. Being diagnosed with cancer can be a distressing time for you and those closest to you. We have a clinical psychology service within the department. They may be able to help with worries and difficulties you might be having before, during or after your treatment. If you think this may be helpful to you, please ask staff to put you in touch.

There are also voluntary organisations providing information and support. These include:

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| Macmillan Cancer Support. | ☎ 0808 808 0000 (Mon-Fri 9am – 8pm) |
| Provides practical, medical, emotional and financial advice for those affected by cancer. | |
| 🌐 www.macmillan.org.uk | |
| Prostate Cancer UK | Helpline: 0800 074 8383 |
| There are support groups throughout the country. Please check the website to find your local group. | |
| 🌐 www.prostatecanceruk.org | |
| Maggie's Gartnavel | ☎ 0141 357 2269 |
| Maggie's Lanarkshire, Monklands Hospital | ☎ 01236 771 199 |
| Maggie's Forth Valley | ☎ 01324 868 069 |
| Maggie's Centre provides a comprehensive cancer support programme for people and their families affected by cancer. | |
| 🌐 www.maggies.org | |

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| Cancer Support Scotland – The Calman Centre, Gartnavel Complex | Freephone 0800 652 4531 |
| Provides emotional and practical support on a one-to-one basis and through community based groups. Complementary therapies available. | |
| 🌐 www.cancersupportscotland.org | |
| Macmillan Benefits Team (within the Beatson) | ☎ 0141 301 7374 |
| Provides free and confidential advice for people affected by cancer and their carers. | |
| Beatson Cancer Centre | |
| If you want to find out more about our Centre please visit | |
| 🌐 www.beatson.scot.nhs.uk | |
| NHS 24 | ☎ 111 |

Care Opinion

We welcome your comments and feedback about our service. If you would like to give us feedback please go to:

🌐 www.careopinion.org.uk or telephone:

☎ 0900 122 3135 or scan the QR code:



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