



NEW PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET

Welcome to Tacoma/Valley Radiation Oncology Centers! We look forward to assisting you with your radiation therapy treatment. This information is provided to familiarize you with the process and procedures required prior to your treatment.

Your first appointment will be for a consultation visit with one of our radiation oncologists. This visit will include a health history, physical exam and a discussion of treatment recommendations and/or options. It may be necessary to schedule other diagnostic tests in order to determine the best course of treatment and/or your physical ability to start treatment.

The next scheduled appointment is usually for review and discussion of test results and/or for a CT Simulation. This appointment may take 30-90 minutes. A CT simulation involves using a specialized CAT (CT) Scan to determine the treatment field position. Sharpie pen marks and/or tattoos will be placed on the skin so that we can position you precisely for the radiation therapy treatment. If you are marked with the permanent tattoos, please do not attempt to remove them. These tattoos are a record of the location of the treatment field for your current treatment. This particular treatment field may need to be identified many months or even years in the future. This procedure may take 10-45 minutes.

Treatment usually begins between 10-14 business days after the CT/simulation appointment. This allows your physician and the Dosimetry staff time to build your intricate, computerized treatment plan. The number of treatments prescribed by your radiation oncologist will depend on the size, location, type and radiosensitivity of the disease or tumor as well as your general health condition. The length of time for the treatment varies with each individual and depends on the type of treatment planned by your physician. Generally, the treatments are short in duration and are painless. Radiation therapists will position you on the treatment machine and will then leave the room during the actual treatment. It will be important for you to lie very still during the treatment. You will be monitored via an audio-visual system for your safety. Treatments are generally given daily, Monday through Friday, at approximately the same time each day. We will attempt to accommodate any requested specific time of day as best we can. Occasionally, there may be an unavoidable delay that will necessitate you waiting beyond your scheduled appointment time, and we apologize should this occur. We assure you, however, that we do make every possible attempt to keep the treatment schedule on time.

For those who may have physical difficulties, there is a wheel chair available for you at each treatment facility. Staff members will not be able to assist you into or out of the treatment center office due to liability issues. Therefore, please make arrangements to have someone come with you to help you in and out of your automobile and into the treatment center.

Side effects due to radiation therapy are expected. These are related to the size and location of the area being treated and to the treatment technique prescribed by your physician. You will be advised about this on an individual basis. Radiation therapy skin reaction is one of the most common side effects experienced by many on treatment. We offer a few general suggestions in order to keep the skin in as good of a condition as possible. We recommend:

- Keep area clean and dry
- Clean area with physician or nurse approved cleansing agent
- Do not apply soap, creams, ointments or cosmetics to the area unless approved by the doctor
- Aloe Vera Gels (99%- 100% pure and colorless) may be applied as often as needed
- Avoid applying any substance to the skin 2 hours before treatment time
- Protect the skin from direct sunlight
- Do not use hot water bottles, heating pads, sun lamps, ice packs or tape on treatment area
- If the underarm is in the treatment field, do not shave or use deodorant (non aluminum herbal deodorants may be used)
- Wear loose fitting cotton clothing over treatment area when skin becomes sensitive

If you are concerned about any reaction (skin redness, etc.) during your course of treatment, please bring it to the attention of the nurse or radiation therapist.

Another common side effect of radiation therapy is fatigue or lethargy. It is important to avoid becoming over-tired. It may be helpful to take rest periods during the day.

The staff will closely monitor you during the course of your treatment. You will be seeing your radiation oncologist weekly for an evaluation. It may be helpful to keep a written list of questions for this visit. If you have questions or any problems that need immediate attention, please let the nurse know as soon as possible upon your arrival so that these needs can be addressed without delay.

Prescription Medications: Please refer to the attached Medication Refill Policy.

We are here to serve you and will be happy to assist you in any radiation therapy related problems. We do, however, ask that you consult your primary health care provider or medical oncologist for other health concerns.

We will make every effort to make your radiation therapy treatment session as comfortable as possible. If we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to speak with your doctor or nurse.

Thank you for allowing us to participate in your care.
The Physicians and Staff of Tacoma/Valley Radiation Oncology Centers