Stereotactic Ablative Radiation Therapy to the Lung

The Ottawa Hospital Cancer Centre
Disclaimer

This is general information developed by The Ottawa Hospital Cancer Centre. It is not intended to replace the advice of a qualified health-care provider. Please consult your health-care provider who will be able to determine the appropriateness of the information for your specific situation.
Your doctor has prescribed radiation therapy to your chest area. Radiation therapists will be administering your treatments. You may also see the radiation oncology nurse during your treatment and your radiation oncologist will see you weekly.

If you have concerns or questions, please discuss them with your radiation therapy team. They are here to help you in the following weeks.

### Smoking

Patients are encouraged to stop smoking or at least not to smoke during treatment. Smoking increases side effects and decreases the effectiveness of your treatment. If you are having difficulties stopping smoking please talk to your health care team.

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*Please note that the following is a list of acute, or short-term, temporary reactions to your radiation treatment. Please discuss possible long-term effects of your treatment with your Radiation Oncologist*

### Possible Side-Effects

#### Coughing and/or Shortness of Breath

It is unlikely that you will experience coughing and/or shortness of breath (not already present before the start of your radiation treatments). Please consult your radiation therapy team if you do.

### Management

**Medication:** Do not use over the counter cough syrups unless recommended by your radiation oncologist.
Humidifier: Use a cool-air vaporizer or humidifier in your room to keep the air moist.

Drinking: Drink plenty of fluids such as water.

Going outside: Avoid going outside on hot, humid days or on very cold days.

Sleeping: Use extra pillows to raise your head and shoulders when resting or sleeping.

Clothing: Avoid tight fitting clothing around your neck.

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**Painful Swallowing**

You may develop pain or soreness when swallowing. This may occur 1-2 weeks from the start of your treatment and may impact your ability to eat enough food.

**Management**

**Drinking**
- Drink plenty of fluids, such as water to keep your throat moist.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages.
- Avoid liquids that are too hot or too cold; room temperature is recommended.
- Avoid liquids that are acidic such as orange or citrus juices.

**Eating**
- Eat soft foods such as yogurt, mashed potatoes, gravies, soups, puddings, gelatin desserts, cooked cereals and eggs.
- Avoid hard or crunchy foods which may further irritate your throat, such as crackers, raw vegetables or potato chips.
- Avoid foods that are too hot or too cold; room temperature is recommended.
- Avoid foods that are acidic such as oranges and grapefruits.
- Avoid spicy foods.
**Humidifier**

- Use a cool-air vaporizer or humidifier in your room to keep the air moist.

**Radiation Induced Fatigue**

You may experience some level of fatigue during the course of your treatment. Fatigue is the feeling of being mentally and/or physically tired. You may already be feeling tired as it is one of the most common symptoms associated with cancer. This lack of energy can get in the way of your normal functioning making it harder to concentrate and bringing down your mood. Some patients may feel even more tired in the first two weeks following their radiation treatments. It may take a few weeks to return to how you felt before the treatments.

**Management**

- **Eating:** Eat a balanced diet and drink plenty of fluids.
- **Set priorities:** Continue with regular daily activities, however, only perform most important tasks if fatigue increases.
- **Rest:** Take short naps during the day if required. Aim to get the majority of your sleep at night.
- **Stay active:** Physical activity and exercise can help to minimize the effects of fatigue. Take a brisk 20-30min walk daily if you are able.

Let your radiation therapy team know if you are feeling very fatigued, sleepy, depressed or are having difficulty performing everyday tasks. Your radiation therapy team can direct you to other resources as required.
**Other Side-Effects**

If you experience side effects other than those listed in this pamphlet, please notify your radiation therapy team and you will be referred to the appropriate health professional.

**Notes**

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