Brachytherapy at the Peel Regional Cancer Centre

Prepared by

BRACHYTHERAPY EDUCATION WORK GROUP

Welcome to the brachytherapy program at the Carlo Fidani Peel Regional Cancer Centre. We hope that this short video will help to explain the different steps of your brachytherapy journey.

First, let’s take a quick tour through the Radiation Therapy department. As you enter through the Cancer Centre Doors from the parking lot, you see Tim Horton’s on your right, to the left is the oncology registration desk, and to the far left the radiation therapy reception desk. In the far corner is the Treatment Preparation and Education Desk. Around the corner from the Reception Desk is the Review Clinic. This is where you will go to see your Radiation Oncologist after all your treatments are finished. Along the left side of the long sunlit hallway are the six radiation treatment units. You will be brought through this hallway to get to the brachytherapy area. The next place to visit is the CT Planning area. Part of your brachytherapy planning may involve a visit here. This is the Recovery Room where you will be assessed by the team before each of your brachytherapy treatments. The last place to visit on this quick tour is the brachytherapy treatment room. This is where your treatment will take place.

There are many steps to having brachytherapy treatment and each will be explained in this video. These steps include Education, Treatment Planning, Treatment, Review, and Follow-Up Care. The health care team and volunteers are here to guide and help you and your family during each of these steps.

There are many members of your health care team. During your time here you will meet Radiation Oncologists, nurses, radiation therapists, medical physicists, unit clerks, and volunteers. You may also meet other health care team members such as anesthesiologists, dieticians, psychosocial oncology team members, advance practice nurses, students and residents. Your health care team will give you the best plan of care that will meet your needs.

Education. Your treatment should have been discussed with you by a Radiation Oncologist and Nurse when you made the decision to have brachytherapy. A brachytherapy booklet should have been given to you during that visit. This booklet is a written copy of the information shown in this video. A Radiation Therapist or nurse will come after you watch this video to answer any questions you might have.

The next step in your brachytherapy treatment is Treatment Planning.

A treatment plan will need to be prepared before your brachytherapy treatment can be given. Your health care team will tell you the type and timing of planning that is needed for you.
A team that includes your Radiation Oncologist, a Treatment Planner, and a Medical Physicist will work together to create your treatment plan. Once the plan is ready it will go through a number of separate quality checks to make sure that the best & safest plan for your treatment is created.

Your Brachytherapy Treatment.

You will be given an appointment with the date and time of your first brachytherapy treatment. A nurse will call you the week before your treatment to review how to get ready for your treatment and answer questions you may have.

Please come 30 minutes before your treatment appointment to check in. It’s important to check in for each treatment appointment at the radiation therapy reception desk by showing your Health Card.

Once you have checked in please go to the main radiation therapy waiting area.

You will be met by a member of the brachytherapy team and brought to the brachytherapy recovery room.

Your healthcare team may have told you to bring someone with you who will drive you home after your treatments. Please make sure you have made these plans before the day of your treatment. Family members or friends should stay in the main radiation therapy waiting area. Children should not be left alone. Cell phones can only be turned on in this waiting area.

Once you are in the recovery room you may be asked to change into some hospital gowns. Once you have changed, you will be given a bag where you can keep your belongings. We recommend that you leave anything valuable, such as any jewelry or money at home.

You will stay in the recovery room until you are brought to the brachytherapy treatment room. Before you go into the treatment room, a radiation therapist will use a small tool to scan your body for radiation. This is to check that you are not bringing anything radioactive into the treatment room. Once you are scanned you will be taken into the treatment room where you will meet your brachytherapy team. You will be assisted into the correct treatment position.

The nurse may need to monitor your blood pressure and heart rate during your treatment. You may be connected to a monitor in order to do this. Your brachytherapy team will explain the treatment procedures to you before your treatment starts. These procedures are also outlined in your brachytherapy booklet. It is very important to stay still and breathe normally during your treatment. Once your treatment is finished, the radiation therapist will scan your body again on your way out of the treatment room. You will then be taken back to the recovery room. A nurse will assess you before you can go home. If you are planned to have more than one treatment, you will be given details about your next appointment before you leave.
As you go through your treatments you may start to notice the side-effects that were talked about before you started your treatment. You will be assessed by your healthcare team throughout your treatment journey. It’s important to tell them of any changes that happen during or after your treatment. They have information that they can give you to help you manage your side-effects.

You will be seen one week after your last treatment in the review clinic. It is important to check in for each review appointment at the review clinic by showing your health card. At this appointment a radiation oncologist and nurse will assess any side-effects you may be having.

By your last appointment, your follow-up plan should have been discussed with you. Your follow-up may be an appointment at the oncology clinic, with the doctor who referred you, or it may be somewhere else. With the help of a radiation oncologist, a specific follow-up plan will be created for you. If you are not sure of your follow-up plan by your last day of treatment, please ask for it before you leave.

We would like to thank you for taking the time to watch this video. Hopefully we were able to give you the information you need about your brachytherapy journey. A Radiation Therapist or nurse will come after this video to answer any questions you might have. Again Thank You.