



HIGH DOSE RATE BRACHYTHERAPY | GYNECOLOGICAL UTERO-VAGINAL TREATMENT

High dose rate brachytherapy consists of administering radiation to the affected or diseased tissue. Because a dose of radiation is directed to a very precise location while preserving healthy tissue, side effects are minimized.

Utero-vaginal radiation therapy makes it possible to treat the cervix and the uterus. Three applicators (small tubes) are used. The first two are placed at the end of the vagina while the third goes in the uterus.

A specialized team made up of radio-oncology technologists, the nursing assistant, the medical physicist and the doctor will take care of you.

The treatment is not painful and does not require hospitalization.

Please be reassured that there will be no danger of radioactive transfer to your loved ones after the treatment.

HOW LONG SHOULD I EXPECT THE SESSION TO TAKE?

For the first treatment, you will be in the hospital for between 4 and 5 hours, which will include:

- the procedure in the operating room;
- the time in the recovery room;
- the CT-scan;
- waiting time (30 to 45 minutes);
- the treatment (5 to 30 minutes)
- a period of observation of your general condition before you leave the hospital (minimum of 15 minutes).

Later treatments will last between 2 and 3 hours.

PREPARATION FOR YOUR FIRST TREATMENT

THE DAY BEFORE

When you meet with the technologist to prepare for your treatment, you will be given a prescription for misoprostol (Cytotec®). You must pick up this medication at the pharmacy. **Before you go to bed on the night before your first treatment, you must insert this capsule into your vagina.** It will cause your cervix to dilate so it will be possible to install the *smit sleeve*¹.

You must remove all polish from finger and toe nails. Do not eat anything after midnight the day before your treatment (at least 8 hours of complete fasting). You are allowed to drink 250 milliliters of liquid per hour (no pulp and no dairy products). Stop drinking 1 hour before arriving at the hospital. We advise you to bring a snack that you can eat as soon as your treatment has ended.

IMPORTANT

You cannot drive after your treatment. You must therefore be accompanied.

THE DAY OF THE TREATMENT

YOUR ARRIVAL

On the morning of the first treatment, you must go to room 3536 (3rd floor, day surgery) at 7 am. We advise you to give your personal belongings to the person accompanying you.

When we take you to the operating room, the person accompanying you can go to waiting room number 4 in radio-oncology, in the basement (SS). We will find and notify this person when you have returned from the recovery room.

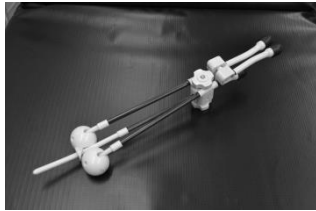


*Smit sleeve*¹

A small ring which will keep the cervix open during the treatments.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THE TREATMENT?

First, the three applicators (Fletcher colpostats) will be placed in the area(s) to be treated. This will be done in the operating room. You will be completely asleep under a general anesthesia during the procedure, during which the gynecologist will dilate the cervix so a small ring (*smit sleeve*¹) can be installed. A urinary catheter will also be installed for the treatment. As soon as these are all in place, you will be taken to the recovery room, then in radio oncology..



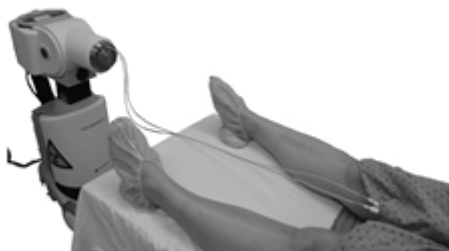
Colpostats, Fletcher

In radio-oncology, you will be taken to a room for a CT-scan. This examination generates radiological images of the area to be treated. When the images have been obtained, the medical physicist and the doctor will plan your treatment. During this time, you will be waiting in a resting room, lying on a stretcher. The person who accompanied you can join you there.

When the planning for the treatment is completed, you will be taken to the treatment room where the technologist will attach the applicators to the device. At the end of the treatment, the urinary catheter will be removed. All other applicators will be removed, except for the *smit sleeve*¹, which will remain in place for the other visits. It will be removed after the final radiation oncology appointments

Before you leave, we will check your vital signs to be sure that you are doing well. A snack will also be suggested.

At subsequent treatments the applicators will be installed in radio-oncology. The brachytherapy team will work closely with an anesthetist and a respiration therapist who will administer an anesthetic, to induce sleep before the applicators are put in place.



WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS?

Keep in mind that each person will react differently and not all patients will have these side effects. The possible side effects are:

- fatigue following the treatment;
- vaginal discharge and/or bleeding a few days after the treatment;
- diarrhea;
- a burning sensation when urinating;
- vaginal dryness;
- unusual sensitivity in the treated area;
- nausea related to the administration of a sedative.

SIGNS OF COMPLICATIONS TO WATCH FOR

Notify the radiation therapy team immediately if you experience any of the following symptoms at the end of your treatment.

If you did not have chemotherapy: a fever above 38.3 °C for more than 24 hr (take temperature orally).

If you had chemotherapy: a fever above 38.3 °C (take temperature orally)

- persistent or increasing pain at the treatment site;
- any other symptom that worries you.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO FOLLOW DURING YOUR TREATMENT

- Use a mild, unscented soap (for example, Dove) on the area treated.
- Avoid taking scented baths (bubble bath, shower gel, etc.).
- You must refrain from having sexual relations for the entire treatment period.

INFORMATION



You can reach the brachytherapy team at 819 346-1110, ext. 14602, Monday to Friday, between 8 am and 4 pm.



If the clinic is closed, call Info-Santé at 811.



Should any of the symptoms listed above worsen, go to the nearest hospital emergency department.