



HIGH DOSE RATE (HDR) BRACHYTHERAPY PROSTATE CANCER TREATMENT

Your physician recommends a high dose rate (HDR) brachytherapy procedure to treat your prostate cancer. Herein you will find information that will help you to better understand what HDR brachytherapy is all about and what to expect.

HDR brachytherapy is a type of radiotherapy. During the treatment, a high dose of targeted radiation is delivered to your prostate to destroy the cancerous cells while maintaining normal tissue integrity. No hospitalization is required for this treatment.

A multidisciplinary team composed of a physician, a medical physicist, radio-oncology technicians, and nurses will take care of you.

**Your body will not be radioactive following the treatment.
You will therefore not pose a threat to your loved ones.**

IMPORTANT

**You will not be able to drive after your treatment.
You must therefore be accompanied to your treatment.**

WHY HDR BRACHYTHERAPY TREATMENT?

The choice of treatment you were offered is based on recognized protocols. The medical specialists involved in your case work together to clearly inform you of existing treatment alternatives and their side effects. They will then propose the treatment that will suit you and that will be best adapted to your expectations and physical condition.

If you should meet other patients who have had brachytherapy treatment, remember that each case is unique and that your treatment was selected based on your personal requirements.

PREPARATION FOR THE TREATMENT

A few weeks before the treatment

After your meeting with the radio-oncologist, a brachytherapy technician will contact you:

- to plan a preparatory meeting for your treatment in order to gather information and data, to perform a check-up, and to notify you of the instructions and guidelines you will need to follow;
- to explain the treatment to you and to answer your questions.

Seven days before the procedure

- Stop taking anti-inflammatories (Advil[®], Motrin[®], Aspirin[®], etc.). However, acetaminophen (Tylenol[®], etc.) is permitted.
- Other medications to stop taking: _____

The evening before the treatment

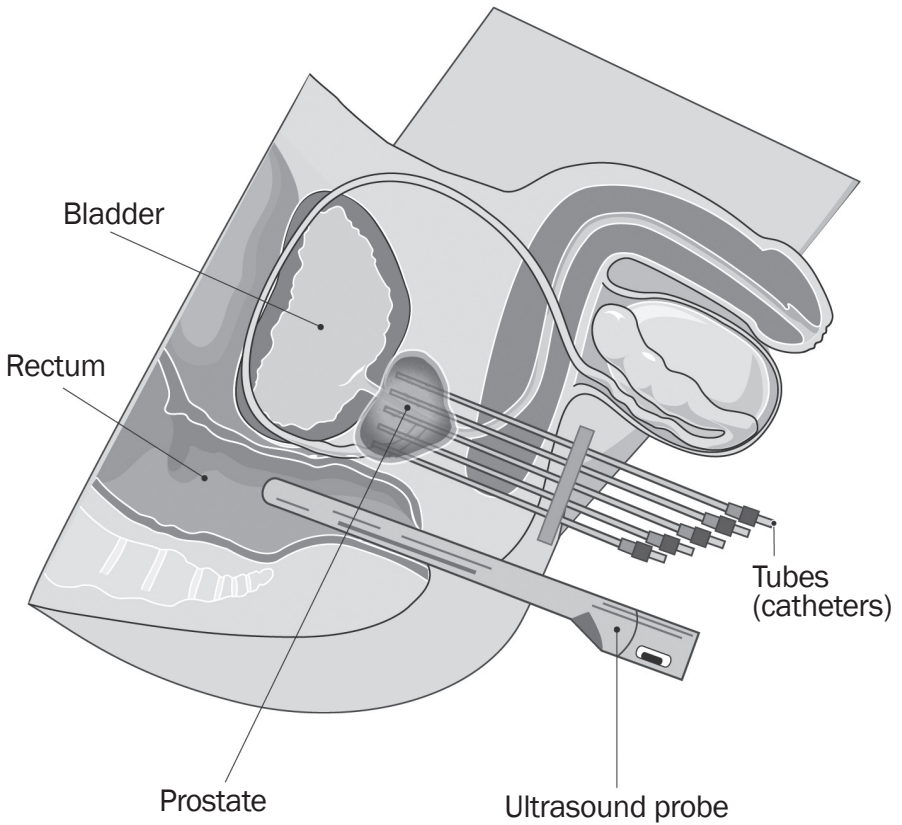
- Do not eat anything after midnight the day before your treatment (at least 8 hours of complete fasting). You are allowed to drink 250 milliliters of liquid per hour (no pulp and no dairy products). Stop drinking 1 hour before arriving at the hospital.
- In the evening, perform a rectal enema (Fleet™ enema), as prescribed.
- Wash the pelvic area with chlorhexidine as prescribed.
- Have a light supper (e.g.: lean meat such as chicken, or fish accompanied by potatoes and other cooked vegetables). Avoid certain vegetables: broccoli, cauliflower, turnips, corn, and onions.

On the morning of the procedure

- Two hours before the procedure, perform a rectal enema (Fleet™ enema), as prescribed.
- Bring an up-to-date list of your medications with you in order to inform your radio-oncologist about which drugs you normally take. Also bring your personal medications with you so that you can take them during the day, if necessary.
- Bring an extra underwear and absorbent pads with you to use if needed.
- Do not take your diabetes medication.
- Other medications to stop taking: _____

TREATMENT PROCEDURE

- On the day of your treatment at Hôpital Fleurimont:
At the scheduled time, go directly to radio-oncology waiting room no. 4 in the basement of wing 6.
- A technologist will come to get you and lead you to the treatment room.
- The anesthesiologist will perform either a general anesthesia which will put you to sleep or an epidural anesthesia which will remove sensation for the duration of the procedure. You will therefore not feel any pain.
- A urinary catheter will be inserted to help evacuate your urine. The catheter will be removed at the end of the day unless decided otherwise.
- The physician will insert tubes (catheters) into your skin which will pass through the perineum (the area between the scrotum and the anus) in order to reach your prostate. Regardless of the type of anesthesia administered, you will not feel any pain.
- During the procedure, the medical team will use a medical imaging system (ultrasound) to ensure the exact position of the catheters.
- Once the dose plan is completed, the technologists will connect the catheters to a treatment device. This device sends a radioactive source through these tubes. The treatment will last 20 to 30 minutes.
- The catheters will be removed after the treatment.
- Finally, you will be taken to the recovery room, and then managed by day surgery where you will remain under observation until your condition allows you to leave the hospital.



DURATION OF THE TREATMENT

Generally, the overall process lasts the entire day and includes:

- Reception in radio-oncology;
- Brachytherapy procedure for the prostate (approximately 2 hours);
- Treatment (approximately 30 minutes);
- Observation in the recovery room and in the day surgery unit.
The duration varies according to the condition of each patient.

POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS

Remember that every person reacts differently. Therefore, side effects will also vary from one person to another. You might therefore notice:

- Bruises on the testicles and penis with sensitivity in the perineal area.
- Blood in the urine.
- Increased urinary frequency with or without burning sensation. These symptoms might also be present at night.
- Anal irritation with soft or bloody stools.

RARE POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

In the week following your treatment, go immediately to the emergency department:

- If you have chills or fever (38.3°C and above).
- If you are unable to urinate (complete urinary obstruction).

POST-TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Drink water every day (1 to 2 litres daily).
- Take the medication recommended by your radio-oncologist to lower the risk of urinary tract blockage and discomfort when urinating.
- If you feel any pain, take acetaminophen (Tylenol®).
- Once you are back home, for a period of approximately two weeks, gradually resume your daily activities, but do not practice sports or make any intense effort. For example, avoid cycling or training at the gym.
- You can bathe or shower the day after your treatment.

NEXT APPOINTMENT

The radio-oncologist will re-assess you within 48 hours following the procedure. The meeting may be in person or over the telephone, depending on your case. You will be notified by the team.

An appointment at the CLSC will be planned for the day following the brachytherapy procedure:

- If the urinary catheter was removed before your hospital discharge: The technologist will cancel your appointment with the CLSC.
- If the urinary catheter was not removed: Your appointment with the CLSC will be kept to ensure your follow-up and the removal of the urinary catheter.

INFORMATION



Contact the brachytherapy team
by dialling 819 346-1110, ext. 14602,
Monday to Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



If the clinic is closed,
dial 811 for Info-Santé.



If you have worsening complications or side effects,
go to the emergency department of the nearest
hospital centre.

