5 After treatment
Assessing radiation's effects on cancer and your body

- The effect of radiation is still at work in your body
- Side effects begin to subside 2–3 weeks after treatment ends
- Contact the clinic if your side effects worsen or are not improving
- You may be advised to follow a specific diet to reduce your side effects
- Your doctor may prescribe medication for your side effects

CONTINUING CARE
Doctors & nurses continue to monitor George long term. They watch for any side effects. George continues to have imaging scans. He exercises to maintain his well-being and health. He may have additional chemotherapy, surgery, or other treatments.

After treatment
Treatment planning
Consult

Today, George is about to receive radiation treatment for cancer. George’s experience will give you an idea of what to expect. Your radiation treatment may be different.

What is the goal of my radiation treatment?
I have heard something about radiation. Are they true?
Will the radiation affect my skin?
What side effects are more or less likely to occur? Short term? Long term?
How long will the treatment be?
How will radiation affect my chemotherapy?
Can I still work and see people?

Patients with cancer of the digestive system may have a feeding tube or an ostomy bag. The radiation beam will not target these. However, please allow yourself the space to heal and rest.

You may have side effects like upset stomach, diarrhea, pain when swallowing, not feeling hungry, and fatigue. You may also experience skin redness, soreness or peeling. Other side effects are possible.

If you notice any changes in your health, tell your nurse or doctor. You can talk to your care team anytime.
2 Planning session
Determining the best treatment position

- Duration: 60 – 75 minutes
- This is called a 'simulation scan'
- No radiation treatment happens today
- Radiation therapists position your body for the best treatment. They make sure you are comfortable. They make a mold for support.
- The make notes about your position. This way they can put you in the same position every time.

Be sure to tell the therapist if you are uncomfortable.

Your care team may use these techniques to make sure radiation is going to the right place:

- Passive breathing control
- Hands on chest
- Belly board
- Frog leg
- Compression belt
- Gating
- May also include: contrast dye, skin marks, or other devices

3 Treatment planning
Professionals create your custom plan

Your care team will use the planning scan to create your radiation treatment plan. Usually, this will take 5-7 work days. Depending on your case, it might also take more or less time to develop your plan.

Your plan targets your tumor site in the digestive system. It limits the radiation dose on healthy tissues.

4 Treatment
Visiting your clinic daily for radiation

- Duration: 15-45 minutes
- The first treatment is usually longer
- You will see your doctor and nurse at least weekly
- Depending on your case, the details of your treatment may differ

IN THE MEANTIME
Plan
- Arrange transportation to and from the clinic
- Coordinate with your family, your job, and other people so you can come for appointments and focus on healing
- Prepare for treatment
- Get answers to your questions and concerns about insurance and billing
- Speak with a dietician
- Pick up medication
- Seek Support
- Consider reaching out to friends, family, and others
- Speak with a social worker
- Your nurse can refer you to other support services if needed

pets the therapy using the x-rays and scan to ensure George is in the right position.

The therapists use the x-rays and scan to ensure George is in the right position.

Good to see you this week. George. How are you?

I'm less hungry than usual!

Well, see you on your first day of treatment.

We are going to make a mold. It will help keep you in the same position for all your treatments.

George, we're ready for you now.

George drinks contrast before the scan. This will help his care team to see the treatment site surrounding normal tissue.

George, we’re ready for you now.

George notices he is less hungry. He mentions this to his care team.

George needs a warm blanket?

In between treatments, George goes about his day normally. He can safely be around friends and family. He is not radioactive.

George drinks contrast before the scan. This will help his care team to see the treatment site surrounding normal tissue.

George, we’re ready for you now.

George notices he is less hungry. He mentions this to his care team.

George won’t see, smell or feel the radiation. All he needs to do is lay still.

George notices his mold that was made during the planning session.

There are no windows in this room. Once the treatment begins, he is alone in the room while the machine moves around him.

George won’t see, smell or feel the radiation. All he needs to do is lay still.

George applies the cream provided by his doctor.

There is a 2-3 week delay in noticing side effects.

Tell your nurse and doctor if you notice any changes in your overall health. They will give you instructions on skin care.

'BOOST' You may receive extra targeted radiation treatments called a 'boost.' Another planning session may be needed before these treatments.

George doesn’t notice a lot. He applies the cream provided by his doctor.

There are no windows in this room. Once the treatment begins, he is alone in the room while the machine moves around him.

The therapists use the x-rays and scan to ensure George is in the right position.

George notices that he is less hungry. He mentions this to his care team.

George won’t see, smell or feel the radiation. All he needs to do is lay still.

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