



RADIATION TREATMENT TO THE ABDOMEN

The following information will help manage the effects you may experience from radiation therapy to the abdomen. Your treatment team will provide you with any additional information you need. Please ask them any questions you may have.

DURING YOUR TREATMENT

Nausea and/or diarrhea may occur during your treatment course and may often be improved by medication and diet changes. See your doctor if nausea or diarrhea occur.

You may notice that you become increasingly tired during the course of your treatments. This is not unusual and varies greatly among individuals undergoing radiation therapy treatments. You may continue with your usual daily activities as much as possible, but you need to pace your activities and plan for rest periods. Allow others to help you when necessary.

The radiation treatment should not cause you to have any pain. If you develop pain or discomfort that is new or more severe than usual, notify your doctor.

Sometimes, the treatments can cause a decrease in your blood counts. Your doctor, nurse or radiation therapists will let you know if blood work is necessary while taking your treatments.

The skin in the treatment area may become red, dry and possibly peel. Ask your doctor or nurse about lotions that can be used on the skin. You should avoid things that cause irritation to the skin. Use mild soap and avoid the use of soap or commercial products that contain alcohol directly on the treatment site. You may bathe or shower normally but do not rub the treatment site directly with soap or a washcloth. Pat skin dry with a towel. We suggest wearing loose fitting, soft material next to the treated skin. Do not wear a constricting belt. Do not expose the treated skin directly to the sun.

It is very important that you eat well while undergoing radiation therapy. You should eat enough food to maintain your weight. Be sure to include good sources of protein, such as beef, chicken, fish, dairy products and eggs. Protein is necessary to build tissues and promote healing. Visit with the dietitian for nutritional information.

GENERAL DIET GUIDELINES INCLUDE:

- Avoid eating for one to two hours prior to and after receiving radiation treatment
 - Avoid overly sweet, fatty and spicy foods
 - If the smell of food aggravates your nausea, try eating cold foods such as sandwiches, cereal, cottage cheese, etc.
 - Dry foods, such as toast or crackers, may settle your stomach
-

AFTER HOURS

If you need immediate emergency medical attention, please dial 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. All other medical attention outside of the Center's regular office hours (8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday) will be answered by our telephone answering service who will have a doctor from Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center return your call.

TELEPHONE:

Hammond: (985) 542-5000

Gonzales: (225) 644-1205

Baton Rouge: (225) 767-0847

Covington: (985) 875-2234

Houma: (985) 876-9045