

## During Cancer Treatment - **Radiation therapy**

Your treatment plan may include radiation therapy. Radiation therapy uses high-energy rays to cure cancer, keep it from spreading, slow cancer growth or ease symptoms. Modern technology lets doctors treat tumors precisely while sparing much of the healthy tissue around the tumor. [Visit CentraCare.com/services/cancer-care/](https://www.centracare.com/services/cancer-care/) for a virtual tour of your treatment and the specialists centered on you.

### YOUR TREATMENT

Your doctor may treat your cancer with radiation only or order radiation along with chemotherapy and/or surgery. If you will receive radiation therapy, you can expect the following steps:

- **Step 1 Consultation.** A radiation oncologist and nurse will examine and talk with you. Your loved ones are welcome to stay with you.
- **Step 2 Simulation.** A CT simulator scans the area of cancer for designing a treatment plan.
- **Step 3 Computerized treatment planning.** Images used to determine your radiation dose.
- **Step 4 Treatment verification.** You will return for verification films to make sure your body's position on the treatment machine is correct.
- **Step 5 Radiation treatments.** Most get treatment daily, Mon. - Fri., for two to nine weeks. Your plan is based on the best practice guidelines for your diagnosis.
- **Step 6 Last day of treatment.** We will meet with you to go over discharge instructions, answer any questions and schedule a follow-up visit.

### SPECIALISTS CENTERED ON YOU

We have dedicated, skilled, board-certified professionals. Your radiation therapy team include:

- **Radiation Oncologist (doctor)** – Oversees radiation treatments and works with the radiation therapy team to design a treatment plan and ensure correct treatment.
- **Medical Physicist** – Checks and calibrates the equipment and takes precise measurements of the radiation beam.
- **Medical Dosimetrist** – Works with the radiation oncologist to design the treatment plan and calculate the right dose of radiation aiming to effectively treat the tumor while sparing as much healthy tissue as possible.
- **Radiation Therapist** – Aligns and gives radiation treatment under the doctor's order and supervision; keeps daily records and regularly inspects the treatment machine.
- **Registered Nurse** – Specializes in oncology care, available to help you and your family during treatment and manage side effects.

### IS RADIATION THERAPY SAFE?

Radiation has been successfully used to treat patients for more than a century. Before you begin treatment, your radiation oncology team will carefully tailor the treatment plan to assure you receive safe and accurate treatment. Throughout your treatment, members of your team check and recheck your plan. Sophisticated computers are also used to monitor and ensure proper treatment is given. If you undergo external beam radiation therapy, you will not be "radioactive" following treatment, because the radiation does not stay in your body. However, if you undergo brachytherapy, tiny radioactive sources will be implanted inside your body, in or around the tumor, either temporarily or permanently. Your radiation oncology team will explain any special precautions that you or your family and friends may need to take. For more information, visit RT Answers at [www.ranswers.org](http://www.ranswers.org) or the Radiation Nurse at **320-229-4900, ext. 70875**.