

# Radiotherapy to the skin

## Your treatment appointments

- A radiographer will collect you from the main oncology waiting area (A12), explain the treatment to you and discuss possible side effects with you.
- **You will have the opportunity to ask questions at this point.**
- You will then be taken into the treatment room and asked to lie on the treatment couch so the radiographers can position you for your treatment. You will be asked to lie very still in this position and breathe normally.
- The machine is positioned around you to fit the treatment area and it will rest on your skin.
- The radiographers will then leave the room to begin the treatment. They will watch you through a window throughout your treatment.
- **Should you need their assistance at any stage you can raise your hand.**
- When the machine is on it makes a buzzing sound, but treatment is painless.

## Short term side effects

Most side effects are temporary and do not happen to all patients. They generally develop during the second half of a course of treatment and continue up to four to six weeks after a course has finished

- Tiredness
- Sore skin in the treatment area
- Hair loss in the treatment area.
- Nose bleeds (if nose area is being treated)

## Long term side effects

You may experience some scarring in the area of treatment. This may occur a few months after treatment has finished. The treatment can occasionally lead to cartilage damage if we are treating your ear or nose area.



## Do's and don'ts during radiotherapy

- ✓ **Do** continue to wash as normal.
- ✓ **Do** continue your normal skin care regime.
- ✓ **Do** wear a hat, scarf or sunglasses depending on the area of treatment
  
- ✗ **Don't** scratch your skin in the treatment area.
- ✗ **Don't** wet shave, as applicable.
- ✗ **Don't** use a hairdryer (If scalp is being treated)
- ✗ **Don't** rub your skin dry.
- ✗ **Don't** expose the treatment area to the sun.

## What happens after your course of radiotherapy?

Your first follow up appointment will be approximately 3 months after your treatment has finished. This period of time ensures that all the side effects have time to settle down. You will be given further information regarding what to expect after treatment on your last appointment. You can call the department if you have any problems.

## Radiotherapy department contact details

Telephone: 01225 824853      Monday-Friday 8am-3:30pm

Website: [www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/radiotherapy](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/radiotherapy)

## Other useful phone numbers/websites

Bath RUH cancer information centre: (01225) 82 4049

Macmillan: [www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)  
08088 080000

**Life after cancer** PocketMedic® have produced some patient information videos, available at [www.medic.video/swe15-cancer](http://www.medic.video/swe15-cancer) (Life after cancer)

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust  
Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG

01225 428331 [www.ruh.nhs.uk](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email [ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net](mailto:ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net) or telephone 01225 825656.