

Making a mask for your radiotherapy treatment

Introduction

You have been asked to attend for a course of radiotherapy treatment. To make this treatment accurate we will make a mask for you to wear for all your treatments. This will require you attend the radiotherapy department prior to starting your treatment. The mask has several purposes:

- To help you keep still during your treatment
- To ensure you are in exactly the same position each day for your treatment
- To avoid having to draw felt pen marks on your skin, instead they are drawn on the mask.

Making a mask

You may be required to remove your upper items of clothing for this appointment.

A thermoplastic material is used to make your mask; it is placed into a hot air oven for 10 minutes to become soft and pliable. Whilst this is happening you will be positioned on the treatment couch lying on your back with your head on a specific headrest.

The plastic sheet is removed from the oven and placed over your face and if needed your neck and shoulders: it will feel warm. The plastic is then gently moulded around your features to ensure an accurate and comfortable fit. Your mouth and nose will be covered but you will be able to breathe through the perforations. The material cools quickly and sets firm to retain its shape in 7-10 minutes.

As the mask cools, felt pen marks and markers are applied to the mask. After this you will be positioned in the CT scanner which uses x-rays to gain information about the area to be treated.

During this time you will have to lie still on the CT couch.

Whilst the scan is taking place the radiographers will leave the room but will be watching you through the viewing window.

Radiotherapy department contact details

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

Website: 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
08088 080000

Life after cancer PocketMedic® have produced some patient information videos, available at 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

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 or telephone 01225 825656.