Using a Vaginal Dilator

Radiation treatments may cause your vagina to become dry and narrowed. This can make having sex and pelvic exams painful. A vaginal dilator is a smooth plastic tube that is used to help keep the vagina open. It should be used once a day until your follow-up appointment. At that time, your Oncologist will examine you and discuss if you should continue using the dilator.

On the days you have sex, you do not need to use the dilator. Using a water-based lubricant may make sexual intercourse more comfortable.

If you have any questions, please talk to a member of your health care team at your next visit.

Please note that it is normal to have some spotting of blood after using the dilator or having sexual intercourse. This will go away in time.

You should start using the dilator on: _____________________________

First time using the dilator?

Put the dilator in boiled water for 10 minutes and let cool before use. Between uses, please refer to Step #9 on the back of this sheet.

Using the dilator:

1. Wash your hands.
2. Place a water-based lubricant on the rounded end of the dilator. This will make the dilator easier to insert into your vagina. You can buy a water-based lubricant in the condom section of any pharmacy. Do not use Vaseline® or oils to lubricate the dilator, because it may cause infection.
3. Separate the folds of skin that surround your vagina.
4. Insert the lubricated end of the dilator into your vagina.
5. Aim towards the small of your back.
6. Insert the dilator as far as comfortable.
7. Partially withdraw the dilator and reinsert it.
8. Repeat this action for 5-10 times.
9. Wash the dilator with soap and water. Rinse the dilator well and dry.

When do I need to call for help?

- If you experience heavy bleeding or severe pain, call 519-685-8600 and the extension below. Leave a message. This line is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday to Fridays.
- After hours, weekends, and holidays call the same number but press option ‘2’ to reach the on-call Oncologist.
- If you live outside of London, call your family doctor, or go to your nearest Emergency Department.
- If you receive care that is not directed by LRCP staff, please tell a member of your health care team.

Nurse: Tammie Murray ext. 53155

Nurse: Leanne Derrah

Please have your chart number ready when you call:

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