Preparing for Radiation Therapy to the Prostate

Your prostate will be treated with radiation therapy. The prostate is a small organ that lies behind the pelvic bone in men. It sits just below the bladder. Located behind the prostate is the rectum and bowel. The bladder, rectum and bowel can affect the position of the prostate. This is why it is important for these organs to have the same fullness for both the radiation treatment planning (planning CT) and your daily radiation treatment.

Why do I need a full bladder?
A full bladder helps to push your bowel and parts of the bladder out of the treatment area. This may help to reduce some side effects from the radiation therapy. It is important that your bladder is not so full that you are uncomfortable during treatment.

How do I prepare the bladder for planning and treatment appointments?
To achieve a full bladder that is comfortable follow these steps 1 hour before your planning or radiation treatment session:

• Empty your bladder;
• Drink a large glass of water (approximately 1 ½ cups, 12 oz, or 350 ml).

What if I have to empty my bladder before my treatment?
You may be asked to drink more water and wait at least 30 minutes to get some fullness in your bladder.

How do I prepare the bowel for the planning appointment?
Try to have a bowel movement the morning of your planning CT appointment and radiation treatments.

BUT
Do not take extra fibre or laxative in order to have a bowel movement, unless it is part of your normal routine. If you are unable to have a bowel movement you will still have your planning CT done that day.

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