

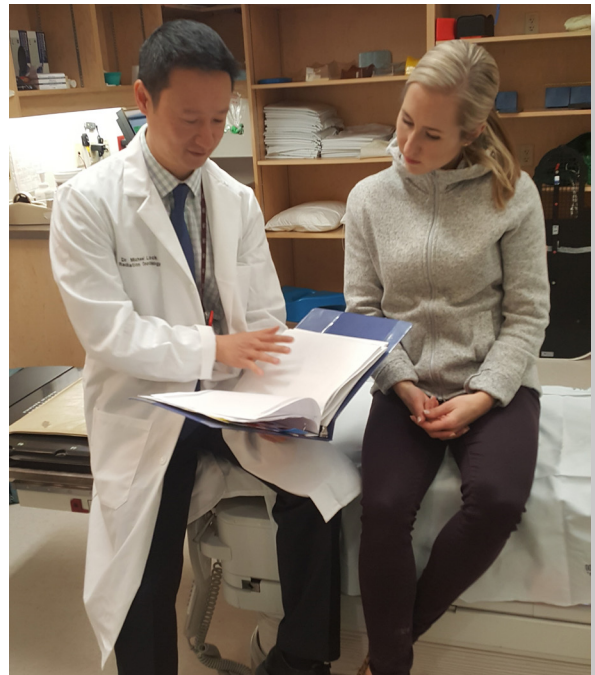
Radiation Therapy

for Liver Cancer

WHAT IS RADIATION THERAPY?

Radiation therapy (also called radiotherapy) uses high doses of radiation to treat cancer. Radiation therapy is used to kill cancer cells, shrink tumors, slow down or stop tumor growth. It can also be used to provide relief from symptoms caused by cancer. The radiation is produced by a machine called a linear accelerator. The energy of the radiation used in radiation therapy is much higher than the energy used for normal x-rays.

Radiation therapy may be used alone to treat cancer, or in combination with other treatments. Sometimes the goal of radiation is to cure a cancer, while other times the goal is to reduce the symptoms of cancer, improve quality of life, and possibly extend life.



HOW DOES RADIATION THERAPY WORK?

Radiation therapy is a local treatment, which means that it is given only to a targeted area of the body. Radiation kills cancer cells by damaging their ability to work, grow and multiply. Cancer cells and normal cells react to radiation differently. Damaged cancer cells eventually die because they can't repair themselves, grow, or multiply. Damage to normal cells does cause side effects, but normal cells are better at recovering from damage.



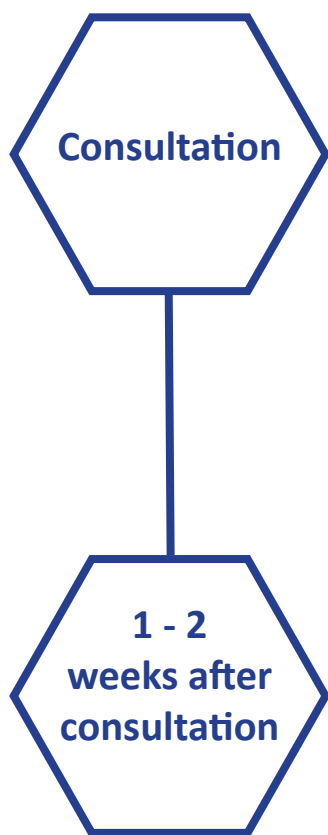
A good radiation plan sends high doses of radiation to areas with cancer, and as little radiation as possible to healthy areas of the body.

HOW IS RADIATION TREATMENT GIVEN?

Radiation treatment involves a number of steps. First, you will have a CT scan simulation appointment. Your radiation treatment plan will be created and customized based on the information from this scan. This process normally takes about 1-2 weeks. When your plan is ready, you will receive your appointments. Most patients receive 5 treatments, but some people receive a single treatment.



RADIATION THERAPY TREATMENT TIMELINE



- You will review your options with a radiation oncologist.
 - You might be asked to have bloodwork done to see how well your liver is functioning.
 - You will also be given a My Care Binder and instructions on how to prepare for your treatment planning scan.
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- You might be booked for an MRI or a procedure in which small markers are put into your liver.
 - You will be scheduled for a specialized CT scan that will be used to plan your treatment. At this appointment, you will be given side effect information which can be inserted into your My Care Binder.



- Your custom radiation treatment will be planned by members of the radiation team.
- This plan will be checked by your radiation oncologist.
- Usually, this is 5 treatments given every second day. Radiation therapy is not given on holidays or weekends.
- It often takes 5 weeks to go from consultation to finishing treatment.
- You will likely have bloodwork done on your first and last day of treatment.
- You will be sent for a CT scan and have more bloodwork done about 1 month after your treatment. This CT scan will be used to compare to CT scans that will happen every 3 months after that.
- How often you have scans and/or bloodwork depends on your overall health, whether you are getting other treatment and the input of other members on your health care team.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If your health care team recommends radiation therapy as a treatment, you will receive the London Regional Cancer Program's My Care Binder. This resource has information about treatment, side effects and how to manage them, the services available through the cancer center, and much more.

NS8138 (2019/08/06)