

# High Dose Rate (HDR) Brachytherapy for cancer of the endometrium

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## What is HDR Brachytherapy?

- Brachytherapy is a type of radiation treatment in which a radiation source is placed inside the body.
- Brachytherapy allows a high dose of radiation to be given in or very close to the tumour.
- With brachytherapy, the healthy area around the tumour is exposed to only a very small amount of radiation.

## Where do I go for Brachytherapy?

- Treatment takes place in the brachytherapy suite at the Juravinski Cancer Centre (JCC).
- You may need one or more brachytherapy treatments.  
Your radiation oncologist (doctor) will decide on the number of treatments you need.
- On the first day of treatment, go the reception area on Level 0 of the JCC. You will be directed to the review waiting room for your appointment.

## **What do I have to do the day before treatment?**

- The day before your treatment, you will get a phone call from a JCC secretary who will tell you when to come in for your appointment.
- Do not smoke or drink any alcohol for 24 hours before treatment.

## **What do I do on the day of treatment?**

- You can eat, drink water or juice, and take your usual medications.
- Plan to be here for 1 hour. Your treatment should take about 30 minutes.
- Bring your health card.
- Leave all of your valuables at home.

## **What happens before treatment starts?**

You will:

- meet the radiation therapist and discuss your health history.
  - be asked to urinate before treatment.
  - undress from the waist down and put on a hospital gown.
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## What happens in the Brachytherapy Suite?

### When you first arrive:

- You will see and meet many staff members who work together on your treatment.
- You will lie down in a comfortable position.
- Your legs will be in the same position as a gynecological exam, such as a PAP test.

### When your treatment starts:

- The area around your vagina will be cleaned.
- You will have an applicator put in your vagina and secured by the doctor and therapist. You will have an x-ray done to make sure the applicator is in the right place.
- A tube will be attached to connect the applicator to the radiation machine.
- The staff will leave the room before the radiation machine is turned on.
- When the treatment is finished, the radiation source goes back into the machine and the tube and applicator will be removed.
- The therapist will clean the area before you go home.

## What if I need help during treatment?

- **The team can stop your treatment at any time if you need help!**
- The team will not be in the room but they will watch you with cameras and talk to you over an intercom, if needed.

## What happens after treatment?

- You will **not** be radioactive.
- You will be able to go home when the treatment is finished.
- You will be given your next appointment before you leave.

## What if I have questions or concerns?

Call your Primary Team if you have question or concerns:

Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

Nurse: \_\_\_\_\_

Chart Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: 905-387-9495, extension \_\_\_\_\_

**Call 905-387-9495 and ask to speak with your Primary Team if you have any of these problems:**

- not able to urinate
- heavy bleeding from your vagina
- chills or fever (temperature higher than 38°C (100°F) or higher)
- very bad cramps or pain in your abdomen

**If you have any of these problems when the JCC is closed, go to the Emergency Department.**



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