

## Questions to Ask Your Doctor

It is important that you fully understand the potential benefits, side effects and goals of radiation therapy. Your radiation oncologist and radiation oncology nurses are available to answer any questions you may have during treatment. They are the best source of accurate information about your particular case.

Coping with a diagnosis of cancer and researching the various treatment options can be a stressful experience. To assist you in this process, below is a list of questions you may want to ask your radiation oncologist if you are considering radiation therapy.

What type and stage of cancer do I have?

What is the purpose of radiation treatment for my type of cancer?

How will the radiation therapy be administered?

Will it be external beam or brachytherapy?

Will the treatments hurt?

For how many weeks will I receive radiation?

How many treatments will I receive per week?

What are the chances that radiation therapy will work?

What is the chance that the cancer will spread or come back if I do not have radiation therapy?

Will I need chemotherapy, surgery or other treatments?

If so, in what order will I receive these treatments, and how soon after radiation therapy can I start them?

How can I expect to feel during treatment and in the weeks following radiation therapy?

Can I drive myself to and from the treatment facility?

Will I be able to continue my normal activities?

What side effects may occur from the radiation and how are they managed?

Will radiation therapy affect my sex life or my ability to have children?

Do I need to take any special precautions, like staying out of the sun or avoiding people with infectious diseases?

Do I need a special diet during or after my treatment?

Can I exercise?

Will side effects change my appearance?

If so, will the changes be permanent or temporary?

If temporary, how long will they last?

How often do I need to return for checkups?

How and when will you know if I am cured of cancer?

What are the chances that the cancer will come back?

How soon can I go back to my regular activities? Work? Sexual activity? Aerobic exercise?

Do you take my insurance?

How should I prepare for this financially?

What are some of the support groups I can turn to during treatment?