Radiation Therapy
Frequently Asked Questions

Radiation Planning

These questions are meant to help you feel prepared for your radiation planning session. If you have additional questions, please call 860-545-2803, and ask to speak to your nurse.

What is this appointment for?
This appointment gives your doctor and the team the information we need to plan your radiation. We will take a CT scan of you in the treatment position. Your scan is for planning purposes only.

You may have heard other words describing this appointment such as mapping, simulation, set-up, planning, marking; these all represent the same process.

How long will this take?
Your planning session can take up to an hour and a half.

Can I eat before this appointment? Can I take my medications?
You can take medications and eat and drink before your planning session unless you are having contrast, in which case you will be given further instructions. If you have pain or think that lying on a hard flat table will be uncomfortable, please feel free to take your regular pain medication.

What if I don’t have a way to get to my appointments?
Our American Cancer Society Patient Navigator, Mary Ann Vanderjagt, can help; she is available by phone at 860-545-4184. She can determine if your insurance covers transportation or if we can provide a volunteer driver to some appointments.

What if I need to change my appointment?
Please call our main number 860-545-2803 to reschedule your appointment.
**What is going to happen today?**
You will come to the Helen & Harry Gray Cancer Center and check in with the receptionist. Once checked in, you may be asked to change into a patient gown. There are lockers where you can place your valuables and your clothes. You will be taken into the CT room and asked to lie down on a table. The team will determine your treatment position (arms up or down, etc.) and if a positioning device will be needed. A CT scan will be done in that position.

You may receive tattoos (tiny permanent dots) or other skin marks that will be used to get you into position for future treatment. Once that is done, you will get dressed and the staff will create your treatment schedule.

**What if I have pain, trouble lying down, or other concerns; is there someone I should talk to ahead of time?**
Call 860-545-2803 and ask to speak to your nurse.

**When will I start treatment? What will my schedule look like?**
Your physician will decide when you start treatment; planning can take 7-10 days. Radiation is usually given daily, Monday through Friday, and the number of treatments is prescribed by your doctor.

**How can I get more information about radiation therapy?**
[www.rtanswers.org](http://www.rtanswers.org) is a website that might be of help to you. We also have a 15 minute educational DVD available. Your physician and/or your nurse can answer specific questions for you and we can give you printed information in your language as well.

**Your comfort and satisfaction are so important to us. Please let any of our staff know how we can help in any way.**
*The Radiation Oncology Department can be reached at (860) 545-2803.*