

Radiation treatment forms an intricate part of cancer treatment. Follow these tips and guidelines to make your journey as smooth as possible.

Radiation Therapy Fact Sheet

DMO Radiation Oncology

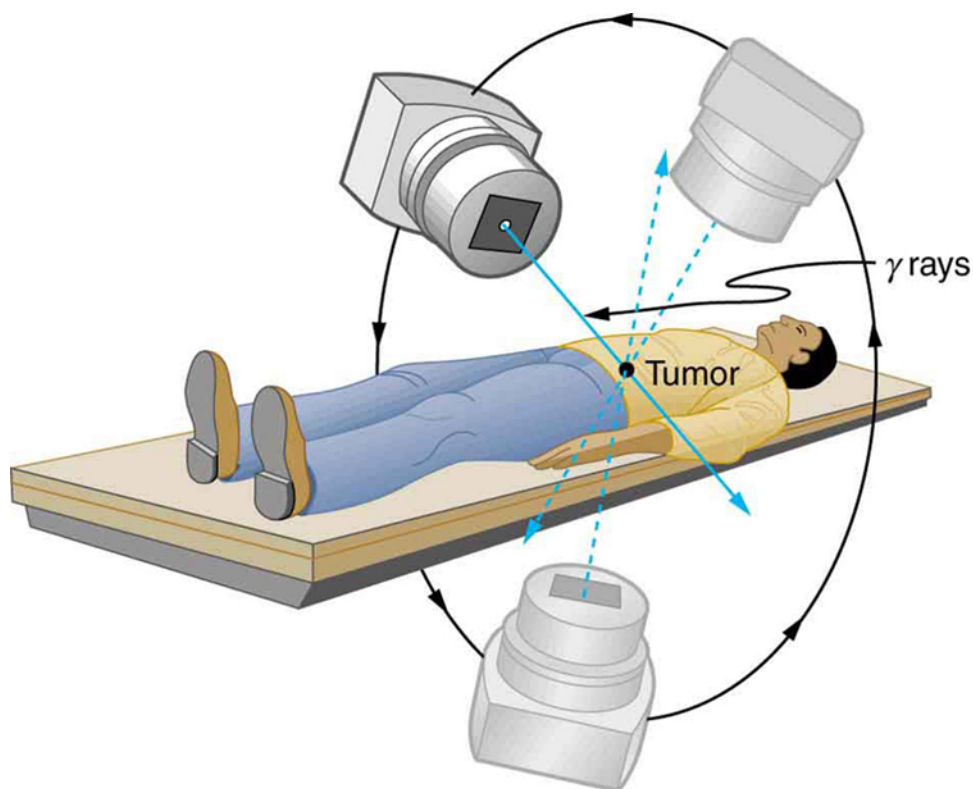


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RADIATION THERAPY FACT SHEET

Our goal with this booklet is to provide some additional information with regards to your radiation treatment as well as provide some guidelines to help make the process easier both for you as the patient as well as your support system. Our DMO team is committed to guiding and supporting our patients during their journey and are always happy to answer any additional questions that you may have during the course of your treatment.

While we understand that the process can be overwhelming, it is our hope that this booklet will assist to alleviate some of the uncertainty that you as a patient are faced with. While we have taken care to include the most relevant information, it is still important to remember that radiation therapy affects people differently.



What is radiation therapy?

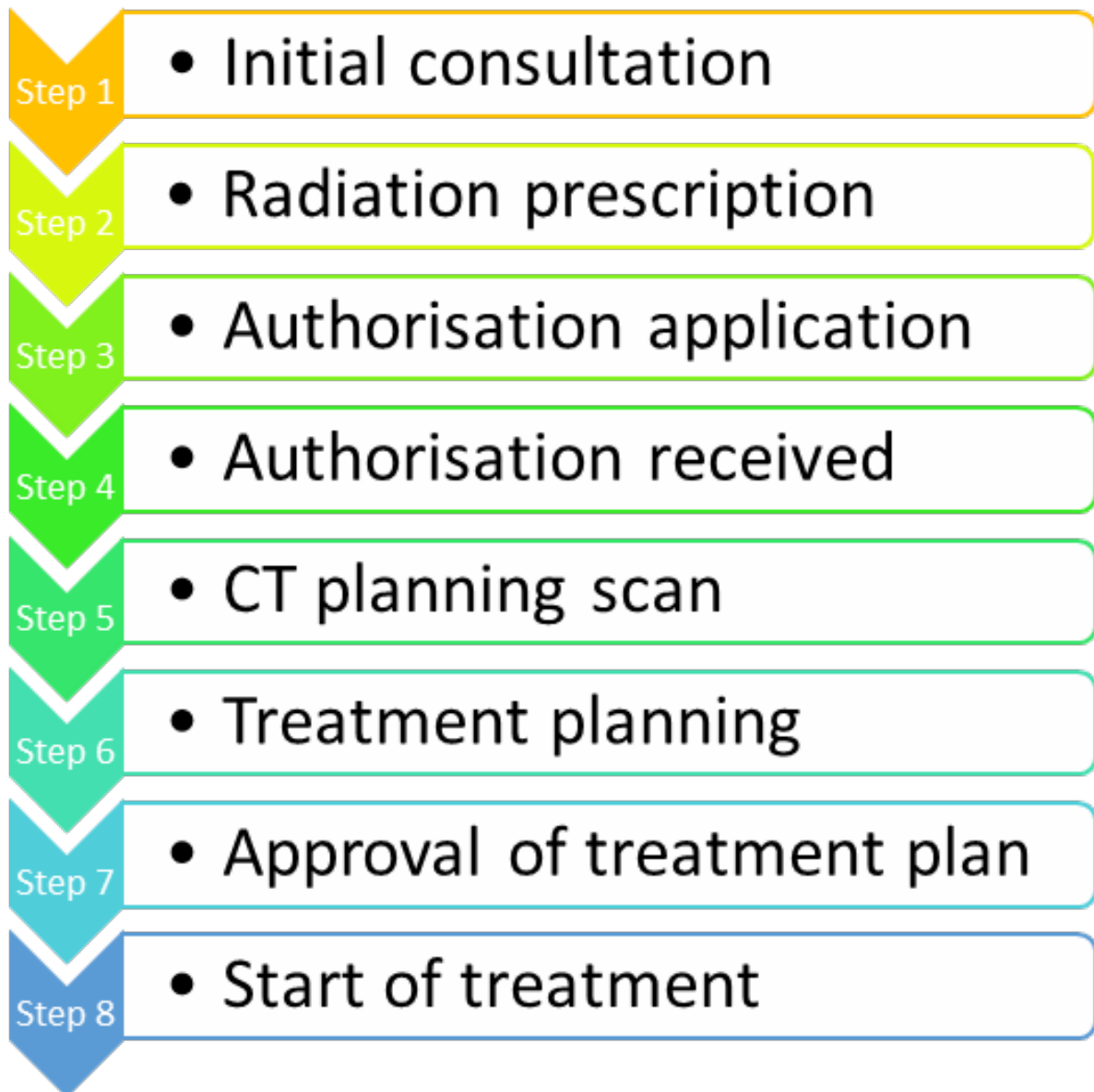
Radiation therapy (also called radiotherapy) is the precise use of radiation in order to safely and effectively treat cancer. Radiation therapy is used to cure and treat cancer and can help alleviate certain cancer symptoms such as pain and bleeding. Radiation therapy uses strong beams of energy to damage and kill the cancer cells. Your treatment is planned in great detail in order to minimize the impact on your healthy tissue, while at the same time making sure that your cancer is treated with maximum effectiveness. Cancer cells are more sensitive to radiation than healthy tissue and cannot repair themselves as normal cells can. This is why your treatment schedule will be worked out in such a way that your body can eliminate the cancer cells while still having enough time to repair your healthy cells, allowing your body to recover. Please remember that in the event of unforeseen circumstances, your treatment schedule may be altered slightly without any adverse effects on the outcome.



Important to remember: Your dose of radiation is cumulative, with slight changes adding up over time. Your radiation oncologist will design your treatment to have the best possible results, while working to protect your healthy cells.

How does treatment planning work?

Because radiation treatment is such an exact science, planning your treatment is extremely important. This will be discussed with you during your initial consultation and this booklet will serve as a backup guide.



What happens during:

The Initial Consultation

Your doctor will study your existing reports and information and will discuss the treatment options with you. Once you've decided on a specific course of treatment and have given consent, that information will be sent through to your medical aid for authorisation.

Authorisation requested

The prescription is sent to your Medical aid for authorisation. This takes three to five working days as per standard medical aid protocol. The duration of your waiting time is also linked to the type of treatment that you are scheduled to receive and as a general guideline:

- For 3D/VMAT treatments – Typically between 3-5 business days
- For SRS/SBRT treatments – Typically between 7-10 business days

Authorisation received

Once your medical aid has authorised your planning scan, the staff from Icon Radiotherapy will contact you in order to set up an appointment. Please be aware that other factors that could delay the scheduling of your scan, but the staff from Icon Radiotherapy will contact you and book you at the first available appointment.

CT Planning Scan

Before beginning your treatment, you will be sent for a CT planning scan. This is to map out the area that will be treated and make sure that the radiation therapists are delivering your treatment to exactly the right area.

Treatment planning

Once the scans are done, the real work begins. Your multidisciplinary team will work together to put together the most effective treatment plan, specifically tailored to your individual needs. This process can take several working days and we thank you for your understanding in this matter. The meticulous planning that takes place during this stage is invaluable for making sure that you get the best possible outcome to your treatment.

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- For 3D/VMAT treatments – Typically between 3-5 business days
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While we understand that waiting for your treatment to be finalized can be stressful, it is not something that can or should be rushed. The waiting period is essential in order to ensure that the highest possible level of effectiveness and precision can be reached. Should there be any unforeseen events that can delay the process over and above the expected waiting times, the staff from Icon Radiotherapy will be in contact with you to provide updates.

Approval of Treatment Plan

Once your treatment plan has been approved by your Radiation Oncologist, you will be contacted by the Icon Radiotherapy staff to set up an appointment for your first treatment. Appointment times are subject to availability, but staff will do their best to accommodate your specific needs.

If you are late for your appointment, please understand that we are working according to a schedule and will treat patients that are on time first. You will be attended to as soon as an opening is available.

Start of Treatment

On the first day of treatment, you will receive a schedule with all your treatment appointments. Please be here 10 minutes before the scheduled time.

Some additional Information

- The radiotherapists assess you every day on which you receive treatment, so please tell them if you have any difficulties or queries. They can offer you considerable advice.
- During your course of treatment, you will see your radiation oncologist once a week. If he/she is not available for any reason one of the other doctors in the practice will see you if necessary.
- During your treatment, you will also see our counsellor for a free counselling session. We encourage every patient to make use of this service. Battling cancer is tough and we are here to support you.
- After your treatment is completed, you must make a 2 week follow up appointment with your radiation oncologist. This is still part of the treatment and will not have any extra charges

DMO Contact Information

Units in our group

Ahmed Kathrada Cancer Institute

Tel.: 010 900 3199 | email: akci.reception@cancersa.co.za

Groenkloof Radiation Oncology

Tel: 012 460 4749 | email: lcm.reception@cancersa.co.za

Muelmed Radiation Oncology

Tel: 012 440 8089 | email: muelmed.reception@cancersa.co.za

Sandton Oncology

Tel: 011 883 0900 | email: soc.admin@cancersa.co.za

West Rand Oncology Centre

Tel: 011 991 3500 | email: wroc.reception@cancersa.co.za

Johannesburg Surgical Hospital

Details to follow soon

Visit us online at www.cancersa.co.za

Treatment can be provided at any of the above locations, by the same Doctors within our group, whichever location may be more convenient to you.

Any appointment related enquiries can be made on the above numbers.

Your comfort and peace of mind is our top priority. Should you require any additional information or have questions during this waiting period, please do not hesitate to reach out to our radiotherapy department on 011 883 2330. Alternatively, you can contact them via email at sandtonplanning@iconsa.co.za