Low Dose Rate (LDR) Brachytherapy for the Treatment of Prostate Cancer

This information will help you get ready for your LDR brachytherapy (BRAY-kee-THAYR-uh-pee) treatment to your prostate at Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK).

Read through this resource at least once before you start your brachytherapy and use it as a reference in the days leading up to your treatments.

About Your Prostate

Your prostate is a walnut-sized gland that lies below your bladder, in front of your rectum. It surrounds your urethra, which is the tube that drains the urine (pee) from your bladder (see Figure 1). Your prostate adds fluid to your semen (ejaculatory fluid).

Figure 1. Your prostate anatomy
About Brachytherapy

Brachytherapy is a type of radiation therapy that’s used to treat prostate cancer. Radiation therapy kills cancer cells with high-energy rays. It works by damaging the cancer cells and making it hard for them to multiply. Your body is naturally able to get rid of the damaged cancer cells.

With brachytherapy, your healthcare provider will place tiny radioactive implants, each about the size of a sesame seed, inside your prostate gland. They’ll give off radiation for a period of time and then stop. They’ll stay in your prostate for the rest of your life.

About the radioactive implants

The radioactive implants, also known as seeds, will be made of either radioactive iodine (I-125) or palladium (Pd-103). Your radiation oncologist will tell you which is the best choice for you. Both types of implants are covered with titanium.

Your healthcare provider will implant 50 to 125 seeds, depending on how big your prostate is.

A radiation safety officer will give you a card to carry with you after your procedure. The card states that you’re receiving radiation therapy and has the date when the radioactivity will be done. If you must go to a hospital for any reason before the date on the card, tell the healthcare provider that you’ve had seeds implanted.

Your role on your radiation therapy team

You’ll have a team of healthcare providers working together to provide the right care for you. You’re part of the team, and your role includes:

- Arriving on time for your procedure.
- Asking questions and talking about your concerns.
- Telling someone on your radiation therapy team when you have side effects or pain.
- Caring for yourself at home.
Quitting smoking, if you smoke. If you want to quit, call our Tobacco Treatment Program at 212-610-0507.

- Drinking liquids as instructed.
- Eating the foods suggested by your radiation therapy team.
- Maintaining your weight.

**Getting Ready for Your Procedure**

You and your healthcare team will work together to get ready for your procedure. Help us keep you safe during your procedure by telling us if any of the following statements apply to you, even if you aren’t sure.

- I take a blood thinner. Some examples are aspirin, heparin, warfarin (Coumadin®), clopidogrel (Plavix®), enoxaparin (Lovenox®), dabigatran (Pradaxa®), apixaban (Eliquis®), and rivaroxaban (Xarelto®). There are others, so be sure your healthcare provider knows all the medications you’re taking.
- I take prescription medications (medications prescribed by a healthcare provider), including patches and creams.
- I take over-the-counter medications (medications I buy without a prescription), including patches and creams.
- I take dietary supplements, such as herbs, vitamins, minerals, or natural or home remedies.
- I have a pacemaker, automatic implantable cardioverter-defibrillator (AICD), or other heart device.
- I have sleep apnea.
- I’ve had a problem with anesthesia (medication to make you sleep during surgery) in the past.
- I’m allergic to certain medication(s) or materials, including latex.
- I’m not willing to receive a blood transfusion.
- I drink alcohol.
• I smoke.
• I use recreational drugs.

Presurgical testing (PST)

Before your procedure, you’ll have an appointment for presurgical testing (PST). The date, time, and location of your PST appointment will be printed on the appointment reminder from your healthcare provider’s office.

You can eat and take your usual medications the day of your PST appointment.

During your appointment, you’ll meet with a nurse practitioner (NP) who works closely with anesthesiology staff (specialized healthcare providers who will give you anesthesia during your surgery). Your NP will review your medical and surgical history with you. You may have tests, such as an electrocardiogram (EKG) to check your heart rhythm, a chest x-ray, blood tests, and any other tests needed to plan your care. Your NP may also recommend that you see other healthcare providers.

Your NP will talk with you about which medications you should take the morning of your surgery.

It’s very helpful to bring the following things to your PST appointment:

☐ A list of all the medications you’re taking, including prescription and over-the-counter medications, patches, and creams.

☐ Results of any tests done outside of MSK, such as a cardiac stress test, echocardiogram, or carotid doppler study.

☐ The name(s) and telephone number(s) of your healthcare provider(s).

About drinking alcohol

The amount of alcohol you drink can affect you during and after your procedure. It’s important to talk with your healthcare providers about how much alcohol you drink. This will help us plan your care.

• If you stop drinking alcohol suddenly, it can cause seizures, delirium, and
death. If we know you’re at risk for these complications, we can prescribe medications to help keep them from happening.

- If you drink alcohol regularly, you may be at risk for other complications during and after your procedure. These include bleeding, infections, heart problems, and a longer hospital stay.

Here are things you can do before your procedure to keep from having problems:

- Be honest with your healthcare providers about how much alcohol you drink.
- Try to stop drinking alcohol once your procedure is planned. If you develop a headache, nausea (feeling like you’re going to throw up), increased anxiety, or can’t sleep after you stop drinking, tell your healthcare provider right away. These are early signs of alcohol withdrawal and can be treated.
- Tell your healthcare provider if you can’t stop drinking.
- Ask your healthcare provider questions about drinking and your procedure. As always, all of your medical information will be kept confidential.

**About smoking**

If you smoke, you can have breathing problems when you have a procedure. Stopping even for a few days before your procedure can help. If you smoke, your healthcare provider will refer you to our Tobacco Treatment Program. You can also reach the program by calling 212-610-0507.

**About sleep apnea**

Sleep apnea is a common breathing disorder that causes you to stop breathing for short periods of time while sleeping. The most common type is obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). With OSA, your airway becomes completely blocked during sleep. OSA can cause serious problems during and after your procedure.

Please tell us if you have sleep apnea or if you think you might have it. If you use a breathing device (such as a CPAP device) for sleep apnea, bring it with you the day of your procedure.
Arranged for someone to take you home

You must have a responsible care partner take you home after your procedure. Make sure to plan this before the day of your procedure.

If you don’t have someone to take you home, call one of the agencies below. They’ll send someone to go home with you. There’s usually a charge for this service, and you’ll need to provide transportation.

**Agencies in New York**

- Partners in Care: 888-735-8913
- Caring People: 877-227-4649

**Agencies in New Jersey**

- Caring People: 877-227-4649

**Complete a Health Care Proxy form**

If you haven’t already completed a Health Care Proxy form, we recommend you complete one now. If you have completed one already, or if you have any other advance directives, bring them to your next appointment.

A health care proxy is a legal document that identifies the person who will speak for you if you can’t communicate for yourself. The person you identify is called your health care agent.

Talk with your healthcare provider if you’re interested in completing a health care proxy. You can also read the resources *Advance Care Planning* ([www.mskcc.org/pe/advance_care_planning](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/advance_care_planning)) and *How to Be a Health Care Agent* ([www.mskcc.org/pe/health_care_agent](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/health_care_agent)) for information about health care proxies, other advance directives, and being a health care agent.

**Exercise**

Try to do aerobic exercise (exercise that makes your heart beat faster) every day. Examples include walking at least 1 mile (1.6 kilometers), swimming, or biking. If it’s cold outside, use stairs in your home or go to a mall or shopping center. Exercising will help your body get into its best condition for your procedure and make your recovery faster and easier.

**Follow a healthy diet**

Follow a well-balanced, healthy diet before your procedure. If you need help with
your diet, talk with your healthcare provider about meeting with a clinical dietitian nutritionist.

**Buy your supplies**

You’ll need to buy the following supplies:

- Bisacodyl (Dulcolax®) 5mg tablets. These are usually sold as a box of 10 tablets, but you’ll only need to take 1 tablet.
- NuLYTELY® solution and flavor packs (cherry, lemon-lime, orange, and pineapple). This comes in a 1-gallon (128 ounces) bottle, but you’ll only need to drink ½ gallon (64 ounces). Your healthcare provider will give you a prescription for this.

This is also a good time to stock up on clear liquids to drink the day before your procedure. See the table in the “Follow a clear liquid diet” section for examples of liquids to buy.

**7 Days Before Your Procedure**

**Follow your healthcare provider’s instructions for taking aspirin**

If you take aspirin or a medication that contains aspirin, you may need to change your dose or stop taking it 7 days before your procedure. Aspirin can cause bleeding.

Follow your healthcare provider’s instructions. **Don’t stop taking aspirin unless they tell you to.** For more information, read *Common Medications Containing Aspirin, Other Nonsteroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs), or Vitamin E* ([www.mskcc.org/pe/common_meds](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/common_meds)).

**Stop taking vitamin E, multivitamins, herbal remedies, and other dietary supplements**

Stop taking vitamin E, multivitamins, herbal remedies, and other dietary supplements 7 days before your procedure. These things can cause bleeding. For more information, read *Herbal Remedies and Cancer Treatment*
2 Days Before Your Procedure

Stop taking nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)

Stop taking NSAIDs, such as ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®) and naproxen (Aleve®), 2 days before your surgery. These medications can cause bleeding. For more information, read Common Medications Containing Aspirin, Other Nonsteroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs), or Vitamin E (www.mskcc.org/pe/common_meds).

1 Day Before Your Procedure

Note the time of your procedure

A staff member from the Admitting Office will call you after 2:00 PM the day before your procedure. If your procedure is scheduled for a Monday, they’ll call you on the Friday before.

The staff member will tell you what time to arrive at the hospital for your procedure. They’ll also remind you where to go. If you don’t get a call by 7:00 PM, call 212-639-5014.

If you have any changes in your health or need to cancel your procedure for any reason, call your radiation oncologist.

Prepare your NuLYTELY bowel preparation solution

On the morning of the day before your procedure, add lukewarm water to the NuLYTELY, filling it to the top of the line on the bottle. Add a flavor pack, if you choose. Use only a flavor pack that was provided with your NuLYTELY.

With the cap on, shake the NuLYTELY bottle until the powder is dissolved. The mixture will be clear, even if you used a flavor pack. If you prefer, you can place the bottle in the refrigerator to chill it. Many people have told us that NuLYTELY tastes better cold. Don’t mix the NuLYTELY earlier than the morning before your procedure.
Take a bisacodyl tablet

At 1:00 PM on the day before your procedure, swallow 1 bisacodyl tablet with a glass of water.

Follow a clear liquid diet

- You can have solid food for breakfast and lunch. Aim to finish your lunch by 2:00 PM.
- After lunch, start the clear liquid diet.
  - A clear liquid diet includes only liquids you can see through. Examples are listed in the “Clear Liquid Diet” table.
  - Try to drink at least 1 (8-ounce) glass of clear liquid every hour while you’re awake.
  - Drink different types of clear liquids. Don’t just drink water, coffee, and tea.
  - Don’t drink more than 2 cups (16 ounces) of liquids with caffeine.
  - Don’t drink diet liquids, even if you have diabetes. If you do, you may feel weak or dizzy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clear Liquid Diet</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Drink</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Soups</strong></td>
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| **Sweets**        | • Gelatin (such as Jell-O®)  
                    • Flavored ices  
                    • Hard candies (such as Life Savers®) | • All others |
| **Drinks**        | • Clear fruit juices (such as lemonade, apple, cranberry, and grape juices)  
                    • Soda (such as ginger ale, 7-Up®, Sprite®, and seltzer)  
                    • Sports drinks (such as Gatorade®)  
                    • Black coffee  
                    • Tea  
                    • Water | • Juices with pulp  
                    • Nectars  
                    • Milk or cream  
                    • Alcoholic drinks |
Drink the NuLYTELY bowel preparation

At 3:00 PM on the day before your procedure, start drinking the NuLYTELY. Drink 1 (8-ounce) glass of the mixture every 15 minutes. Drink only half of the NuLYTELY solution (64 ounces). Throw out the other half. Then, keep drinking clear liquids.

The NuLYTELY will cause frequent bowel movements, so be sure to be near a bathroom when you start drinking it. To help prevent irritation, you can apply petroleum jelly (Vaseline®) or A&D® ointment to the skin around to your anus after every bowel movement.

The Night Before Your Procedure

- Take the medications your healthcare provider told you to take the night before your procedure. Take them with a small sip of water.
- Shower using soap and water the night before or the morning of your procedure.

Instructions for eating and drinking before your procedure

- Do not eat anything after midnight the night before your procedure. This includes hard candy and gum.
- Between midnight and up until 2 hours before your scheduled arrival time, you may drink a total of 12 ounces of water (see figure).
- Starting 2 hours before your scheduled arrival time, do not eat or drink anything. This includes water.
The Day of Your Procedure

Things to remember

- Take the medications your healthcare provider told you to take the morning of your procedure. Take them with a small sip of water.
- Don’t put on any lotion, cream, deodorant, powder, or cologne.
- Don’t wear any metal objects. Remove all jewelry, including body piercings. The equipment used during your procedure can cause burns if it touches metal.
- Leave valuable items (such as credit cards, jewelry, and your checkbook) at home.
- If you wear contact lenses, wear your glasses instead. If you don’t have glasses, bring a case for your contacts.

What to bring

- A pair of loose-fitting pants, such as sweatpants.
- Brief-style underwear that’s 1 to 2 sizes larger than you normally wear.
- Sneakers that lace up. You may have some swelling in your feet, and lace-up sneakers can accommodate this swelling.

Where to park

MSK’s parking garage is located on East 66th Street between York and First Avenues. If you have questions about prices, call 212-639-2338.

To reach the garage, turn onto East 66th Street from York Avenue. The garage is located about a quarter of a block in from York Avenue, on the right-hand (north) side of the street. There’s a tunnel that you can walk through that connects the garage to the hospital.

There are also other garages located on East 69th Street between First and Second Avenues, East 67th Street between York and First Avenues, and East 65th Street between First and Second Avenues.
Where to go
Your procedure will take place at Memorial Hospital at 1275 York Avenue, between East 67th and East 68th Streets. Take the B elevator to the 6th floor to get to the Presurgical Center.

What to expect
You’ll be asked to say and spell your name and birth date many times. This is for your safety. People with the same or a similar name may be having a procedure on the same day.

Get dressed for your procedure
When it’s time to change for your procedure, you’ll get a hospital gown, robe, and nonskid socks to wear.

Meet with a nurse
You’ll meet with a nurse before your procedure. Tell them the dose of any medications you took after midnight (including prescription and over-the-counter medications, patches, and creams) and the time you took them.

Your nurse may place an intravenous (IV) line in one of your veins, usually in your arm or hand. If your nurse doesn’t place the IV, your anesthesiologist will do it in the operating room.

During your procedure
When it’s time for your procedure, you’ll either walk into the operating room or be taken in on a stretcher. A member of the operating room team will help you onto the operating bed. Compression boots will be placed on your lower legs. These gently inflate and deflate to help blood flow in your legs.

Once you’re comfortable, your anesthesiologist will give you anesthesia through your IV line and you’ll fall asleep. You’ll also get fluids through your IV line during and after your procedure.

After you’re fully asleep, a breathing tube will be placed through your mouth and into your windpipe to help you breathe. A urinary (Foley) catheter will also be
placed to drain urine from your bladder.

After the Foley catheter is in place, your healthcare provider will use rectal ultrasound to see your prostate. They’ll put tiny needles into your prostate through your perineum (the area of skin between your scrotum and anus, see Figure 1).

Your healthcare provider will use a computer to determine the best place in your prostate to place the seeds. They’ll place the seeds through needles in your prostate.

You’ll have a computed tomography (CT) scan to make sure all the seeds are in the right place. Then, your healthcare provider will remove the needles and the Foley catheter.

**After Your Procedure**

**In the hospital**

You’ll wake up in the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU). A nurse will be monitoring your body temperature, pulse, blood pressure, and oxygen levels. They’ll also make sure you can urinate (pee) on your own.

You may have some pain after your procedure. Your healthcare providers will ask you about your pain often. You’ll be given medication to treat your pain as needed. If your pain isn’t relieved, please tell one of your healthcare providers.

Your nurse will discuss your discharge instructions with you and your caregiver.

**Meet with your radiation safety officer**

You’ll meet with a radiation safety officer from the Radiation Safety Service. They’ll check the level of radiation in your body. They’ll also give you a wallet card to keep with you for 6 months after your procedure that explains the radiation. It will have the date when the radioactivity will be done. If you must go to a hospital for any reason before the date on the card, tell the healthcare provider that you’ve had seeds implanted.
The radiation safety officer may also give you instructions about any radiation precautions you need to take around your family and friends.

**At home**

**Straining your urine**

Although it’s very rare, you may pass a seed with your urine. Losing a seed won’t affect your treatment.

For the first 4 days after your procedure, strain your urine with the strainer your nurse gave you. If you pass a seed, don’t touch it with your hands or fingers. Instead, pick it up with a spoon or a pair of tweezers. Place it in a small covered container, such as an empty jar. Store it away from people. Call your radiation oncologist or the Radiation Safety Service at 212-639-7391 for more instructions.

If you lose a seed during the first 4 days, keep straining your urine for another 4 days.

**Other instructions**

- If you have any bleeding on your perineum, apply steady pressure with a clean, dry washcloth or gauze for 5 minutes. If the bleeding becomes heavy or doesn’t stop, call your healthcare provider.

- You can resume your regular diet. You may want avoid things that may irritate your bladder. These include caffeine (such as coffee and tea), alcohol, citrus juices, and spicy foods.

- You can shower 24 hours after you’re discharged from the hospital.

- Don’t lift anything over 20 pounds (9.1 kilograms) for at least 1 week after your procedure.

- Most people can go back to work 2 days after their procedure. If your job requires heavy lifting, ask your healthcare provider when you can go back to work.
Follow-up care

Your healthcare provider will want to see you regularly after your LDR brachytherapy. At each of these visits, your team will evaluate your response to treatment. You’ll have a physical exam and blood tests, including a prostate-specific antigen test (PSA), and your healthcare provider will review any symptoms you have. Use these visits to ask questions and discuss your concerns.

Side Effects

Urinary symptoms

Urinary symptoms are the most common side effects of brachytherapy. After your procedure, you may have some of the following symptoms.

- Some people can’t urinate after the procedure or may only be able to urinate a few drops at a time. This is an emergency. Call your healthcare provider right away if you can’t urinate.

- You may need to urinate more often than usual, as many as 1 or more times an hour. This usually starts 2 to 4 weeks after the seeds have been implanted and can last several months or longer.

- You may have some burning during urination. This usually starts 2 to 4 weeks after the seeds have been implanted and can last for about 4 to 12 months.

- You may notice blood in your urine, which will make it look pink. This is common and usually disappears 3 to 7 days after the seeds have been implanted. Call your healthcare provider if bleeding continues after 7 days or if you pass blood clots in your urine.

- You may have bruising around your scrotum and penis. This should go away 1 to 2 weeks after your procedure. Call your healthcare provider if you still have bruising after 2 weeks.

Talk with your healthcare provider if you have any of these symptoms. If you have a procedure to look at your bladder (such as a cystoscopy) planned, wait to have it until after you’ve talked with your healthcare provider.
Bowel symptoms

- You may have bowel movements that are more frequent or softer than usual. This is from irritation to your rectum. This may start 1 week after the seeds are implanted and can last several months or more.
- You may have rectal discomfort or mucus discharge.
- If you have hemorrhoids, they may get worse.

Talk with your healthcare provider if you have any bowel symptoms. If you have a procedure to look into your rectum or colon planned (such as a colonoscopy), wait to have it until after you’ve talked with your healthcare provider.

Erectile dysfunction

Erectile dysfunction, sometimes called ED or impotence, means not being able to achieve an erection. You may notice a change in the strength of your erection. You may have less ejaculate or the consistency may be different.

About 30% of men (3 in 10 men) who have LDR brachytherapy will develop ED within 5 years of the procedure. It’s difficult to predict who will be affected.

If you develop ED, it may be permanent. Tell your healthcare provider if happens. There are many treatments for ED available.

Radiation Safety Instructions

The radioactive implants in your prostate are made of either palladium (Pd-103) or Iodine (I-125). If you’re not sure which type you have, ask your healthcare provider.

If you had palladium implants, you don’t need to follow any safety precautions. **If you had iodine (I-125) implants, follow these instructions.**

The seeds give off a very small amount of radiation. The amount of radiation decreases the further it gets from your body. There’s no measurable radiation 3 feet away.

You can’t make something radioactive by touching it. You don’t have to do
anything special with linens, clothing, dishes, or in the bathroom. The seeds won’t disturb pacemakers or microwave ovens.

Make sure to follow all the instructions on the card that your radiation safety officer gave you, including holding children on your lap and sleeping with your partner in a spoon shaped position.

**Safe sex precautions**

- You can resume sexual activity 1 week after your procedure.
- Use a condom or ejaculate outside of your partner for at least the first 5 ejaculations. Sometimes, one of the seeds can pass from your prostate when you ejaculate. This is rare.
  - Ejaculating in a condom or outside your partner may reduce any worry about being able to ejaculate after the procedure. It also lets you check to see if a seed is in the ejaculate. Call your radiation oncologist or radiation safety if this happens.

If your partner is pregnant, use a condom until the baby is born. This will prevent a seed that may be passed in the ejaculate.

**Traveling**

You can travel, including flying on airplanes. A member of your healthcare team will give you a card explaining you have radioactive seeds implanted. Please keep this card with you. Some security equipment may detect radioactivity or metal.

**Bodily fluids**

The radiation from the seeds won’t get into your blood, urine, or other body fluids.

**Support Services**

**MSK support services**

**Admitting Office**

212-639-7606
Call if you have questions about your hospital admission, including requesting a private room.

**Anesthesia**
212-639-6840
Call if you have questions about anesthesia.

**Blood Donor Room**
212-639-7643
Call for more information if you’re interested in donating blood or platelets.

**Bobst International Center**
888-675-7722
MSK welcomes patients from around the world. If you’re an international patient, call for help arranging your care.

**Chaplaincy Service**
212-639-5982
At MSK, our chaplains are available to listen, help support family members, pray, contact community clergy or faith groups, or simply be a comforting companion and a spiritual presence. Anyone can request spiritual support, regardless of formal religious affiliation. The interfaith chapel is located near the main lobby of Memorial Hospital and is open 24 hours a day. If you have an emergency, please call the hospital operator and ask for the chaplain on call.

**Counseling Center**
646-888-0200
Many people find that counseling helps them. We provide counseling for individuals, couples, families, and groups, as well as medications to help if you feel anxious or depressed. To make an appointment, ask your healthcare provider for a referral or call the number above.

**Food Pantry Program**
646-888-8055
The food pantry program provides food to people in need during their cancer treatment. For more information, talk with your healthcare provider or call the
Integrative Medicine Service
646-888-0800
Integrative Medicine Service offers many services to complement (go along with) traditional medical care, including music therapy, mind/body therapies, dance and movement therapy, yoga, and touch therapy.

MSK Library
library.mskcc.org
212-639-7439
You can visit our library website or speak with the library reference staff to find more information about your specific cancer type. You can also visit LibGuides on MSK’s library website at libguides.mskcc.org.

Patient and Caregiver Education
www.mskcc.org/pe
Visit the Patient and Caregiver Education website to search our virtual library. There, you can find written educational resources, videos, and online programs.

Patient and Caregiver Peer Support Program
212-639-5007
You may find it comforting to speak with someone who has been through a treatment similar to yours. You can talk with a former MSK patient or caregiver through our Patient and Caregiver Peer Support Program. These conversations are confidential. They may take place in person or over the phone.

Patient Billing
646-227-3378
Call if you have questions about preauthorization with your insurance company. This is also called preapproval.

Patient Representative Office
212-639-7202
Call if you have questions about the Health Care Proxy form or if you have concerns about your care.
Perioperative Nurse Liaison
212-639-5935
Call if you have questions about MSK releasing any information while you’re having surgery.

Private Duty Nursing Office
212-639-6892
You may request private nurses or companions. Call for more information.

Resources for Life After Cancer (RLAC) Program
646-888-8106
At MSK, care doesn’t end after active treatment. The RLAC Program is for patients and their families who have finished treatment. This program has many services, including seminars, workshops, support groups, counseling on life after treatment, and help with insurance and employment issues.

Sexual Health Programs
Cancer and cancer treatments can have an impact on your sexual health. MSK’s Sexual Health Programs can help you take action and address sexual health issues before, during, or after your treatment.

- Our Female Sexual Medicine and Women’s Health Program helps women who are dealing with cancer-related sexual health challenges, including premature menopause and fertility issues. For more information, or to make an appointment, call 646-888-5076.

- Our Male Sexual and Reproductive Medicine Program helps men who are dealing with cancer-related sexual health challenges, including erectile dysfunction. For more information, or to make an appointment, call 646-888-6024.

Social Work
212-639-7020
Social workers help patients, family, and friends deal with issues that are common for cancer patients. They provide individual counseling and support groups throughout the course of treatment, and can help you communicate with children
and other family members. Our social workers can also help refer you to community agencies and programs, as well as financial resources if you’re eligible.

**Tobacco Treatment Program**
212-610-0507
If you want to quit smoking, MSK has specialists who can help. Call for more information.

**Virtual Programs**
[www.mskcc.org/vp](http://www.mskcc.org/vp)
MSK’s Virtual Programs offer online education and support for patients and caregivers, even when you can’t come to MSK in person. Through live, interactive sessions, you can learn about your diagnosis, what to expect during treatment, and how to prepare for the various stages of your cancer care. Sessions are confidential, free, and led by expert clinical staff. If you’re interested in joining a Virtual Program, visit our website at [www.mskcc.org/vp](http://www.mskcc.org/vp) for more information.

For more online information, visit the [Cancer Types](http://www.mskcc.org) section of [www.mskcc.org](http://www.mskcc.org).

**External support services**

**American Cancer Society (ACS)**
[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)
800-ACS-2345 (800-227-2345)
Offers a variety of information and services, including Hope Lodge, a free place for patients and caregivers to stay during cancer treatment.

**American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology**
[www.rtanswers.org](http://www.rtanswers.org)
800-962-7876
Group of radiation oncology professionals that specializes in treating people with radiation therapy. Provides information on treating cancer with radiation and contact information for radiation oncologist in your area.
CancerCare
www.cancercare.org
800-813-4673
275 Seventh Avenue (Between West 25th & 26th Streets)
New York, NY 10001
Provides counseling, support groups, educational workshops, publications, and financial assistance.

Cancer Support Community
www.cancersupportcommunity.org
Provides support and education to people affected by cancer.

National Cancer Institute
www.cancer.gov
800-4-CANCER (800-422-6237)
Provides education and support to people with cancer and their families.

ZERO - The End of Prostate Cancer
www.zerocancer.org

Prostate Cancer Foundation
www.pcf.org

US Too International Prostate Cancer Education and Support Network
www.ustoo.org

When to Call Your Healthcare Provider

Call your healthcare provider if you have:

- A fever of 101 °F (38.3 °C) or higher
- Pain that doesn’t get better with your medications
- Any new symptom(s) or physical change(s)
If you have any questions or concerns, talk with a member of your healthcare team. You can reach them Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the numbers listed below.

Radiation oncologist: ____________________________
Phone number: ________________________________

Radiation nurse: ______________________________
Phone number: ________________________________

After 5:00 PM, during the weekend, and on holidays, call 212-639-2000 and ask for the radiation oncologist on call.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.