



Réseau de
cancérologie
Rossy

Rossy
Cancer
Network

Centre intégré
universitaire de santé
et de services sociaux
du Centre-Ouest-
de-l'Île-de-Montréal

Québec 

Your Radiation therapy at the Jewish General Hospital

Your Guide to Preparing for Treatment



This booklet will help you understand and prepare for your radiotherapy treatments. Share it with your loved ones and refer to it with you throughout your treatment. Write down any questions and ask at your next appointment.

McGill

Centre universitaire
de santé McGill



McGill University
Health Centre



Hôpital général juif
Jewish General Hospital



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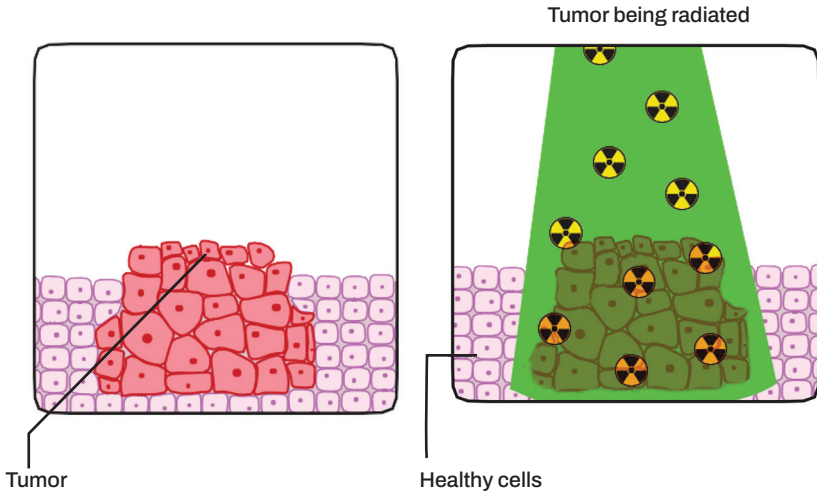
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GENERAL INFORMATION

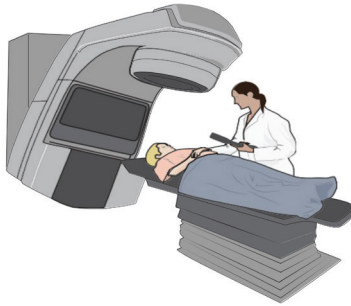
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WHAT IS RADIOTHERAPY?

Radiotherapy is the use of high-energy x-rays to treat cancer.



Our body consists of many types of cells. Each works in its own way to keep us healthy. Cancer forms when a group of cells start to grow out of control.



Radiotherapy uses high doses of x-rays to kill cancer cells. It is applied only to the part of your body that needs treatment. In most cases, the radiation is produced by a large machine similar to the one shown in the picture above.

In some cases it can be given by another type of machine and technique. If this is the case for you, your doctor will provide an explanation at your first visit.

Here's a video from the Canadian Cancer Society about the radiation treatments:

<https://cancer.ca/en/cancer-information/resources/cancer-information-videos/2022/what-is-radiation-therapy>

YOUR JOURNEY

Note: All appointments radiation place in the basement
(S1) of Pavilion G (G-18), closest entrance is Côte-Ste-Catherine

There are several steps in the journey: seeing the doctor at the first appointment, a planning CT scan, the team working on a plan for you, starting your treatments, and check-ups if needed.

Step 1: Your First Appointment



Your radiotherapy journey begins with a consultation with your radiation oncologist.

It's a good idea to bring someone with you to this visit, because you'll be getting a lot of information. The person who accompanies you can help to remember or clarify certain details.

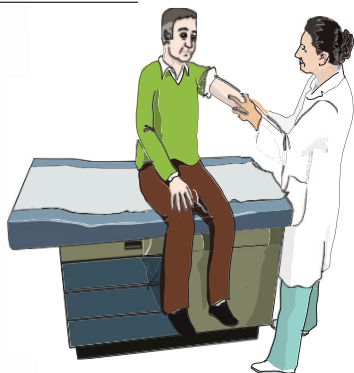
Your radiation oncologist will:

- Review your medical history
- Perform a physical examination
- Review the results of any relevant tests you've had
- Be in contact with your referring doctor

Your radiation oncologist will also explain your treatment plan, including:

- Approximate number of treatments
- Frequency of treatments
- Approximate length of each treatment
- Preparation for treatment and possible side effects

Please bring a **list of any medications** that you are currently taking to this appointment.



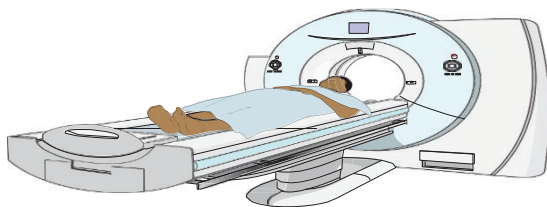
YOUR JOURNEY

(N.B.: This scan is specific to radiation oncology in **G-18**)

Step 2: CT scan imaging for the planning of your radiation therapy

Once you and your radiation oncologist have discussed on the best treatment plan, you will have a CT simulation scan. This CT simulation is a scan of the part of your body that will be treated with radiation.

During this scan, you will be in the same position as when you receive your treatments. In this way, your treating team has pictures of your body that will be used in planning your treatment.



During your CT simulation, your radiotherapy technologists may use special equipment to help position you in a way that can be repeated for each treatment.

The technologists will mark your skin with tiny, permanent tattoos (smaller than a freckle) that will be used as reference points during your treatments.

YOUR JOURNEY

Step 3: Treatment Planning

Your radiation oncologist will prepare your treatment plan (technical aspects of your treatments) with a dosimetrist (a healthcare professional specializing in planning radiation treatments). In doing so, they will use your planning CT scan images and other information about your disease.



Expect to wait between your CT simulation and the beginning of your radiotherapy treatment. This is normal. Rest assured that you will start within a time-frame that is acceptable for your particular situation. Your team will need time to plan treatment specific for you.

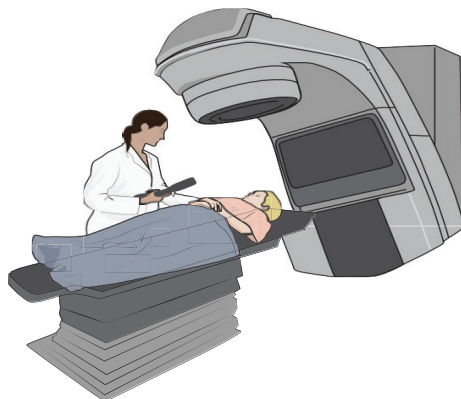
When your treatment plan is ready, you will receive a phone call for your treatments appointments. Treatment usually starts one to three days after the phone call.



Don't be concerned if you miss a call; we will call you back, and or leave a message.

YOUR JOURNEY

Step 4: First Treatment Session



On your first day, come to basement level, S1, Pavilion G-18, and check in at the reception desk. Then wait in the waiting room until the technologist greets you and explains the treatment process.

The radiotherapy technologists will place you in the same position as you were in during your CT imaging. They will take x-ray images to check your position.

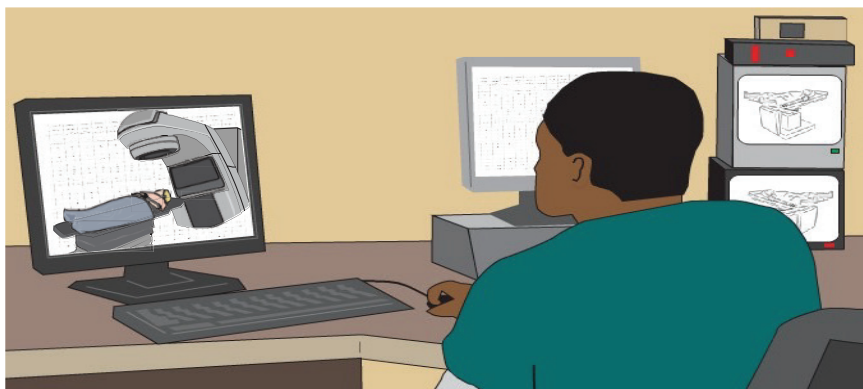
The technologist may use a marker to draw non-permanent lines (called marks) on your skin.

When you arrive for treatment each day, please check in at the reception desk at G18.

*Radiotherapy does not hurt.
You will not become radioactive.
You can be close to and hug others*

YOUR JOURNEY

Step 5: Treatments



Your radiation oncologist will determine the number and frequency of your radiation therapy sessions based on your needs. The sessions are usually held Monday to Friday.

Your treatments will be similar to your first treatment. All the information about your treatments, including the total number of treatments, will be explained the 1st day of treatment.

During your treatments you will be alone in the treatment room.

Your team of technologists will be watching by video camera. They can hear you and can speak to you by intercom, if necessary.

Feel free to speak to your technologists if you have any questions or concerns.

*If, for any reason, you can not keep an appointment for a treatment, please call or leave a message at the reception, at **514-340-8222 poste 22753**.*

During treatments you may be asked to fill in the wellness questionnaire to help the team understand your symptoms and concerns. You will be given information about how to do this from the team.

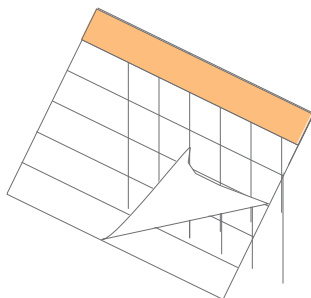
YOUR JOURNEY

Step 6 : Regular Checkups

These regular check-ups are a good time to ask questions, and discuss any side effects with your radiation oncologist.

You will receive an appointment slip at the 1st treatment that will specify if a visit with the doctor is scheduled.

If applicable, it is **very important** to see or speak to the doctor every week during the treatments. We suggest that you write down your questions and bring them to these appointments.



TREATMENT TEAM



During your radiotherapy journey, a team of healthcare professionals will work together to ensure you receive the best possible care. You may meet some of them at various times. Ask your team any questions you might have. **They're here to help.**

Radiation Oncologist

Your radiation oncologist is the doctor responsible for your radiotherapy treatment. He or she will discuss your treatment with you and monitor your progress. Throughout your radiotherapy journey, he or she will work closely with the rest of your treating team to make sure you receive the best possible care.

Radiation Oncology Nurses

Radiation oncology nurses can listen to your concerns, answer your questions, provide support, and manage the side effects of your treatment. They are available before, during and after the treatments, until you have fully recovered from all side effects. They can also connect you with resources in the hospital and in the community.

Radiation Oncology Technologists

The technologists are the ones giving you your treatments. They are responsible for your safety while you are in the treatment room and accuracy of delivery of the radiation treatments. They also monitor your side effects on a daily basis. Don't hesitate to ask them any questions.

TREATMENT TEAM

Medical Physicists

Medical physicists are scientists who are responsible for looking after the radiotherapy equipment to make sure that it meets the highest national and international standards for accuracy and safety.

Dosimetrists

Dosimetrists are specialized radiation oncology technologists who plan your radiotherapy treatment by using the pictures that were taken during your CT simulation scan. They work with your radiation oncologist to create a personalized treatment plan that is just for you.

Dietitians

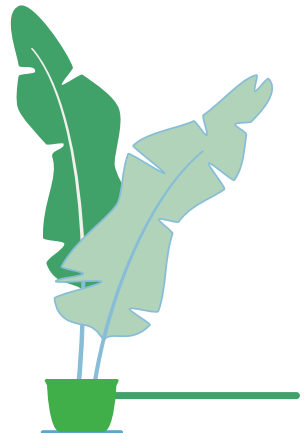
A clinical dietitian may meet with you, depending on your treatment plan. He or she will help you make any changes to your diet during treatments, if necessary.

Social Workers/Hope & Cope

Social workers and representatives of Hope & Cope provide support to you and your family during your radiotherapy treatments. Hope and Cope offers support and wellness-based activities at their Wellness centre.

Receptionists

Receptionists are likely to be the first people you meet when you enter our department. They can assist you with checking in, booking appointments, completing forms and answer question about parking.



TREATMENT TEAM

Clinical Research Associates (CRA)

You may be invited to participate in a clinical trial or research study. A clinical research associate will guide you through the process.

Volunteers

Volunteers help make your visits to the hospital more comfortable. You will meet them as they walk through in the waiting rooms of the Radiation Oncology Clinic. Many of them have had a cancer experience.

They will be happy to guide you and find the right person to answer your questions or concerns.

Your experience

If you would like to comment about the quality of your care or your experience in the department, please contact the Manager of Radiation Oncology at 514-340-8222, ext. 24908.

Note :

*If you are
hospitalized for any
reason, please **call**
514-340-8222
ext. 22753
to inform your
treating team.*

SIDE EFFECTS

You may or may not experience side effects during your treatment. This is normal and your radiation oncologist will discuss it with you.

If you have not received any additional information about side effects, please ask us.

What type of side effects can I expect?

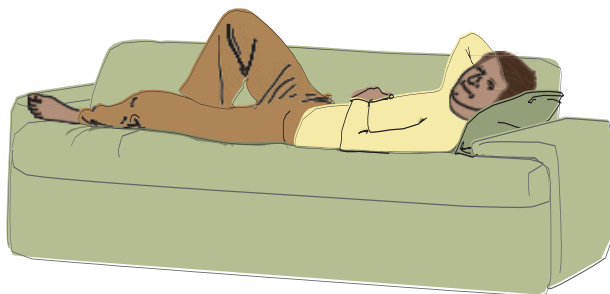
Side effects are related to the area of the body that is being treated. Common side effects include fatigue and skin irritation. You will receive more information about your particular case at the time of first appointment with your radiation oncologist and at the time of CT simulation scan.

If you experience side effects during treatment, please speak with your treating team. Most side effects can be controlled or decreased with medication.

- Most side effects are temporary. They can start at any time during your treatment and decrease in the weeks after your treatment ends.
- Some side effects may start after your treatment has ended.

Will I feel tired?

Radiotherapy can make you feel more tired than usual. Listen to your body and rest, if necessary. If you can, carry on with your normal activities. Some people are able to continue working, though others can not. If tiredness is a problem, speak with your radiation oncologist, nurse or technologist.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

*Ask us your questions.
We're here to help!*

Can radiotherapy affect my lifestyle?

During your treatment, you can perform most of your daily activities. Mild physical activity, such as walking, is encouraged and may be helpful. If you go out in the sun, make sure you are well protected (wear proper clothing) to the treated area. Do not plan a vacation from the time you see the doctor until all your treatments are completed. Once treatment begins, you should try to avoid missing any sessions.

Will it hurt to get the radiation treatment?

No. You will not feel anything out of the ordinary.

Will I be radioactive?

No. You can safely be around other people, including children.

How will my doctor know if my treatment is working?

Your doctor will meet with you regularly during your treatment to evaluate your progress. The radiotherapy may not produce an effect until all of your treatments are finished.

Will I be able to wash or shower normally?

Yes, you can have a bath or shower. Use mild soap and pat your skin dry, instead of rubbing it. Do not shave the area that is being treated.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Will I need a special diet?

That depends on the part of your body that is being treated. If you do require a special diet, you will be referred to a dietitian in the Division of Radiation Oncology, who will prepare a diet plan for you.

Follow the suggestions in “Eating well when you have cancer” from the Canadian Cancer Society :

<https://cancer.ca/en/cancer-information/resources/publications/eating-well-when-you-have-cancer>

Transportation

There may be services in your community to help with transportation. If this is a concern, please ask to speak with a social worker or someone from Hope & Cope.

Parking

There is a reduced parking fee for patients who come for radiotherapy treatments. Please ask about this at the reception desk.



Insurance documents

Please let the receptionist know if any insurance documents need to be completed.

What happens when all of my treatments are finished?

You will have a follow-up appointment with your radiation oncologist or the doctor who referred you to radiation therapy. You can also call the nurses if you experience any side effects or require further assistance.

RESOURCES



Receptionist

G-18 | 514-340-8222, ext. 22753

Doctors or the doctors' secretary

514-340-8288

Radiation oncology nurses

514-340-8222, ext. 24124

Hope & Cope is an organization that supports patients and their families. Supervised and guided by professional staff, its volunteers—who have had experience with cancer—can help you at any stage.
514-340-8222, ext. 22591

Hope & Cope Wellness offers peer support, support groups, and various wellness activities for patients and their families .
514-340-3616 | 4635, Côte-Sainte-Catherine Road
<https://hopeandcope.ca>

The Supportive Care team specializes in pain and symptom control for patients with advanced cancer.
514-340-8222, ext. 23617

**Patient representative /Ombudsman,
Local service quality officer**
514-340-8222, ext. 25833

After working hours

811 health related concerns & register for a family doctor

RESOURCES

BELONG APP for patients, and families. .

BELONG APP offers patients, family and friends bilingual information, resources, and support about and throughout the cancer care journey.

In the BELONG APP, the CIUSSS Segal Cancer oncology team has included:

1. Area for patients and family members/ caregivers to chat and get peer support, and support from Hope & Cope.
2. Information, educational videos including orientation folder, nutrition videos, tour of the Segal cancer, symptom management tip sheets and more.
3. Resources in the community & reliable websites (Look good feel better, Canadian Cancer Society, Foundation Quebecoise du cancer, Cancer and Work, transportation and finances, etc.).



To have access
to these
**Please scan
the QR code**

INFORMATION FROM YOUR RADIATION ONCOLOGY TEAM :

- ☐ Recommendations to follow during the treatment (given at CT Scan)
- ☐ Quebec oncology passport
- ☐ Hope & Cope information sheet
<https://hopeandcope.ca/>
- ☐ Radiation Oncology
<https://www.jgh.ca/care-services/radiation-oncology/>
- ☐ Managing symptoms:
<https://www.jgh.ca/care-services/segal-cancer-centre/managing-symptoms/>

YOU MAY ALSO NEED:

WHERE CAN I GET IT / WHOM CAN I ASK?

- **Parking and transportation form :**
Receptionist
- **Insurance/work forms:**
Receptionists
- **Support & resources:**
Hope & Cope
- **Special dietary information:**
Dietitian in Radiation Oncology
- **JGH Users' Guide app can be download from**
Google Play or App store



Your Notes

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This document was prepared by the Rossy Cancer Network in collaboration with:

- The Jewish General Hospital's Division of Radiation Oncology
- The McGill University Health Centre's Department of Radiation Oncology, Department of Medical Physics, and Patient Education Office
- St. Mary's Hospital Centre, Department of Oncology
- McGill University Health Centre Patient Education Office
- CIUSSS West-Central Montreal, Department of Communications and
- Media Relations

We would also like to thank the oncology and radiation oncology patients who provided valuable help and feedback.

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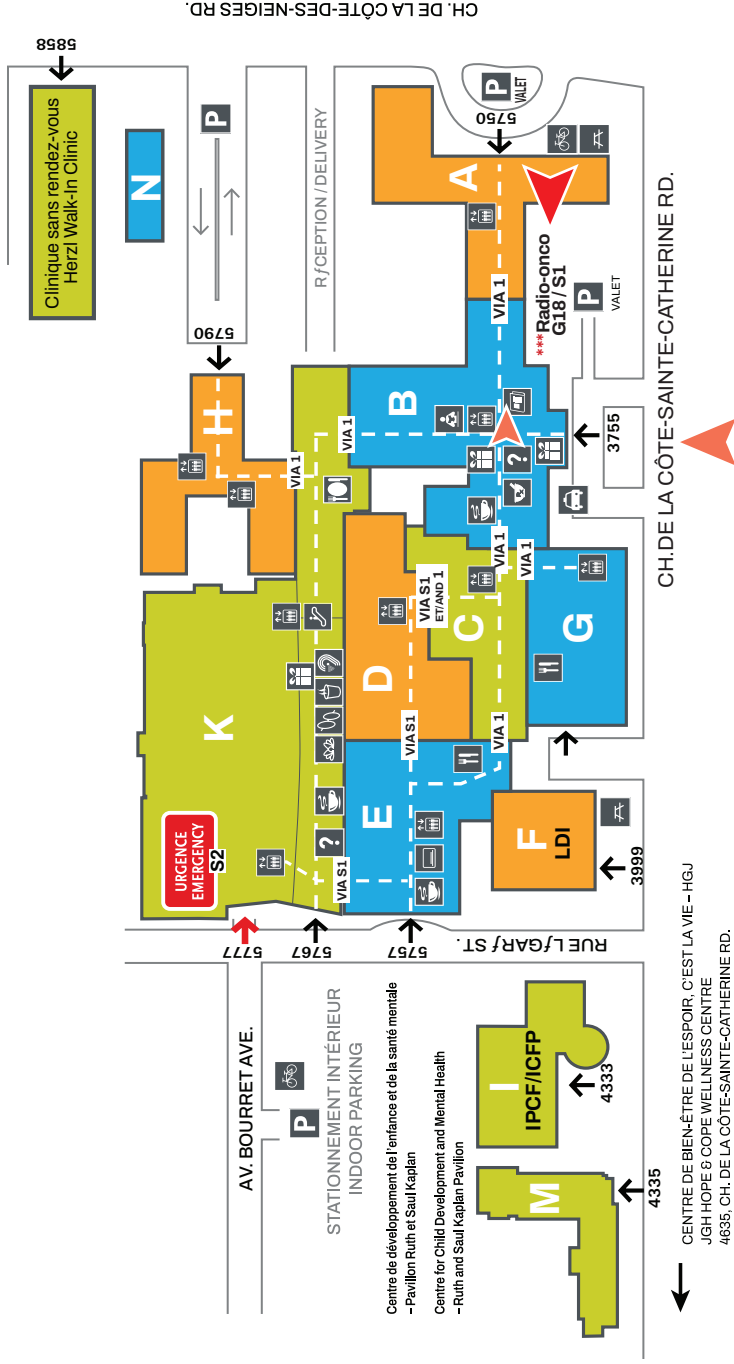
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IMPORTANT : PLEASE READ

The information in this booklet is provided for educational purposes. It is not intended to replace the advice or instructions of a professional healthcare practitioner or to substitute for medical care. Contact a qualified healthcare practitioner with any questions about your own care.

This material is also available at:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| St. Mary's Hospital Centre | smhc.ca |
| Jewish General Hospital | jgh.ca/en/radiationoncology |
| The MUHC Patient Education Portal | muhcpatienteducation.ca |



Closest entrance is the one on Côte-Sainte-Catherine. Just inside the main doors, turn right and take the elevator down to room G18 on the S1 level.