

## Stereotactic Radiation Treatment to the Brain

This handout offers information about stereotactic radiation treatment to the brain.

For more information on radiation treatment, see the Canadian Cancer Society's booklet on Radiation Treatment: A Guide for People with Cancer. Go to the Canadian Cancer Society's website at [cancer.ca](http://cancer.ca) and search for the name of the booklet.

After your radiation treatment, it is safe for you to be around other people (including children) and pets. You are not radioactive.

We offer you and your family member/partner-in-care support during treatment. We also answer any questions you have.

### Your appointments

Your radiation oncologist recommended you have radiation treatment to your brain. This may be delivered in a single treatment (called Stereotactic Radiosurgery (SRS)) or in several treatments (called Stereotactic Radiotherapy (SRT)). The appointments for your planning and treatment appointments are close together. Your appointments are listed in the table below. Your radiation oncologist tells you if you need to have an MRI of your head.

A radiation booking clerk calls you with the dates, times and locations of your appointments. Add this information to the table below. Call the radiation booking office at 905-576-8711 extension 33856 between the hours of 8 am and 6 pm from Monday to Friday if you cannot come to any of these appointments. After these hours, leave a voicemail message. Calls are returned on the next business day. The cancer centre is closed on weekends and holidays.

### Your planning appointments

| Appointment                           | Date/time | Location                                                      |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Radiation MRI<br>(If ordered for you) |           | N wing, B1 level, <b>main hospital</b><br>(see map on page 5) |
| Radiation mould room                  |           | C wing (cancer centre)<br>B1 level, Radiation Therapy         |
| Radiation CT<br>simulation scan       |           | C wing (cancer centre)<br>B1 level, Radiation Therapy         |

You receive your radiation treatment appointment(s) after you have your radiation CT simulation scan. These appointments are in the C wing (cancer centre) on the B1 Level.

### **Your planning appointments**

You are in the cancer centre/ hospital for about 2 to 3 hours for your planning appointment. Take your regular morning medications. Bring any medications you need to take while you are in the cancer centre/hospital.

### **Radiation MRI appointment (if ordered for you)**

Check in at the MRI department for this appointment. The MRI department is located in the N wing on the B1 level of the main hospital. After this appointment, return to the cancer centre and go to the B1 level. When you arrive, go to one of the check-in computers and scan your health card. This tells the healthcare team you have arrived for your appointment.

### **Radiation mould room and radiation CT simulation scan appointments**

When you come for this appointment, you have a mouth bite and head support made for you. They are used during your treatment to help you stay still. Some patients need to have a mask instead of a mouth bite and head support. Your healthcare team decides what is best for you.

Tell the radiation therapist if you have any dental crowns, loose teeth or dentures. It takes about 30 to 45 minutes to make your mouth bite and head support.

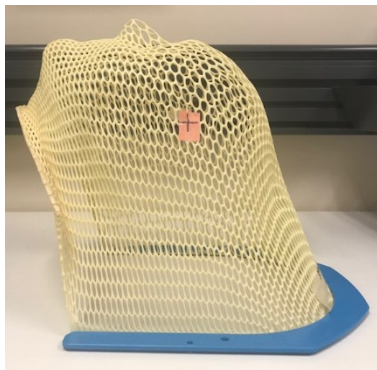
After this, you have your radiation CT simulation scan. You wear the mouth bite and head support or mask for this scan.



Picture of the mouth bite



Picture of the head support



Picture of the mask

### **Your radiation treatment(s)**

Your radiation oncologist may have given you a prescription for a steroid called Dexamethasone. Take this medication as prescribed for you.

At this appointment you have radiation treatment to your brain.

**If you have SRS**, you need someone to drive you home after your treatment and stay with you for 24 hours.

**If you have SRS**, your appointment takes about 30 to 60 minutes. **If you have SRT**, each of your appointments are about 30 minutes.

You wear your head support and mouth bite or mask for your treatment. Before your treatment begins, the radiation therapist takes images (pictures) to check your position. You may feel the table move. The treatment machine moves around you but it will not touch you. The radiation therapists may come in and out of the treatment room during your treatment. The therapists can see and hear you at all times. Do not move until a therapist tells you your treatment is finished.

### **After your treatment(s)**

Take your regular medications as prescribed for you unless your radiation oncologist tells you something different. You do not need to make any changes to what you eat or drink.

#### Side effects you may have

Radiation treatment side effects are different from person to person. The side effects you have depends on:

- The part of your body being treated,
- The type and amount of radiation you receive and,
- Your general health.

After your treatment, you may have:

- A headache.
- Dizziness or you may feel light headed.
- A sore mouth or jaw (if you wear a mouth bite for treatment).
- Nausea (feel sick to your stomach). You may have this for 3 to 6 hours after your treatment.

**If you have a mild headache or jaw pain:**

You may take acetaminophen (example: Tylenol) or ibuprofen (example: Advil) unless your doctor tells you not to. Take as directed on the bottle or box.

**If you have severe headache or jaw pain:**

Call your primary nurse if you have these side effects. You may take acetaminophen (example: Tylenol) or ibuprofen (example: Advil) unless your doctor tells you not to. Take as directed on the bottle or box. You may have been given a prescription for a steroid called Dexamethasone. Take it as prescribed for you.

**Go to the emergency department at the hospital closest to you if you have:**

- A fever above 38.3° C/100.9°F at any time or above 38.0° C/100.4°F for more than an hour.
- A headache that wakes you up or does not get better with medication.
- Any sudden changes in your vision.
- New problems with your balance.
- New weakness in your arms or legs.
- Changes in your strength.
- Numbness or tingling in your arms or legs.
- Confusion or disorientation.
- A seizure within the first 24 hours after treatment (even if you have a history of seizures).

**If you have a problem or concern about a symptom or side effect from your cancer treatment:**

1. Call your primary nurse at the cancer centre from Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4 pm, (except on holidays). Use the phone number your primary nurse gave you.
2. Contact CareChart Digital Health from Monday to Friday, 5 pm to 8:30 am and anytime on weekends and holidays for symptom management support.

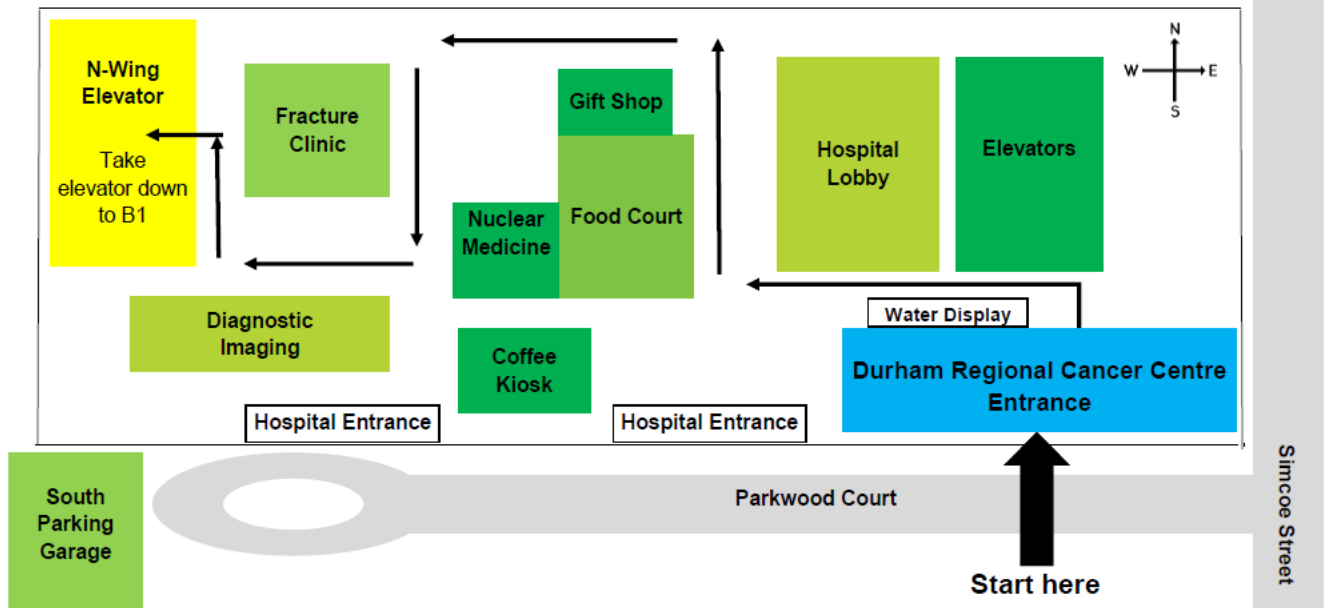
Talk to a nurse using one of these options:

- Call the after-hours telephone line at 1-877-681-3057.
- Request a video call by going to [carechart.ca](https://carechart.ca).
- Use the CareChart Digital Health App. This App is available to download for iOS or Android devices.

Call 911 or go to the emergency department at the hospital closest to you for a medical emergency. Talk to a member of your healthcare team if you have questions or do not understand any information in this handout.

Last reviewed: August 2025

## Directions to the MRI Department from the Durham Regional Cancer Centre



### Directions

1. Park in the south parking garage on Parkwood Court.
2. Go into the Durham Regional Cancer Centre (DRCC).
3. Turn left at the water display.
4. Turn right into the main hospital lobby.
5. Walk past the food court and gift shop.
6. Turn left after the gift shop. You will start to see signs for "MRI Registration."
7. Turn left. You will pass the Fracture Clinic.
8. Turn right after the Fracture Clinic.
9. Turn right. You will see the elevators. Take the elevators down one floor to B1.
10. You will see the MRI Department on the left.

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