

Patient name:

RMH ID:

Patient information

Preparing the bowel and bladder before radiotherapy to the prostate and prostate bed

You have been consented to have radiotherapy treatment to your prostate or site where your prostate has been removed (known as the prostate bed). We will ask you to always have a comfortably full bladder and an empty rectum (bowel) for the radiotherapy planning scan and for every treatment. This is so we can give you the most accurate treatment with the least side effects.

Why do I need an empty bowel?

If the content in your bowels varies too much each day this may move your prostate. This can be due to either gaseous or solid content. To reduce the content in your bowel we ask you to use a gentle enema for two days prior to and on the day of your CT planning scan. We will ask you to use an enema for two days prior to starting your radiotherapy and for each day during the first three, five or ten days of treatment. We will discuss the number of enemas you need with you.

If your bowel seems too large when you have the planning scan, it may be because of gas. If this happens, we will ask you to release the gas and repeat the scan. Although this might seem embarrassing, this is routine practice to improve the accuracy of your radiotherapy.

Why do I need a full bladder?

When your bladder is reasonably full, it will push your bowel and part of the bladder out of the treatment area. This may help to reduce some side effects from the radiotherapy; therefore, it is important to have your bladder **comfortably full** each day. Your ability to keep a comfortably full bladder will depend on how often you usually pass urine. If you need to pass urine more often than every two hours, please tell the doctor. We will assess your bladder function and may prescribe medication to reduce the frequency of passing urine.

We suggest you drink a total of two litres of fluid each day (such as water, squash and soft non-fizzy drinks). This should keep you adequately hydrated and ensure the water you drink before your treatment fills your bladder. We recommend you limit your intake of tea, coffee, alcohol and caffeinated soft drinks as they can cause bladder irritation.

How do I empty my bowel and fill my bladder?

Preparation of the bowel

Instructions for using the enema: Remove the cap from the end of the nozzle, squeeze a drop of the liquid onto a finger and smear it over the nozzle to lubricate it. Insert the nozzle as far as it will go into the back passage and squeeze the tube until it is empty. Continue to squeeze as you remove the nozzle to stop the



medication going back into the nozzle. If at home, dispose of the empty tube in your dustbin, if you are in the hospital, dispose of the empty tube in the **offensive waste** bin – do not flush it down the toilet.

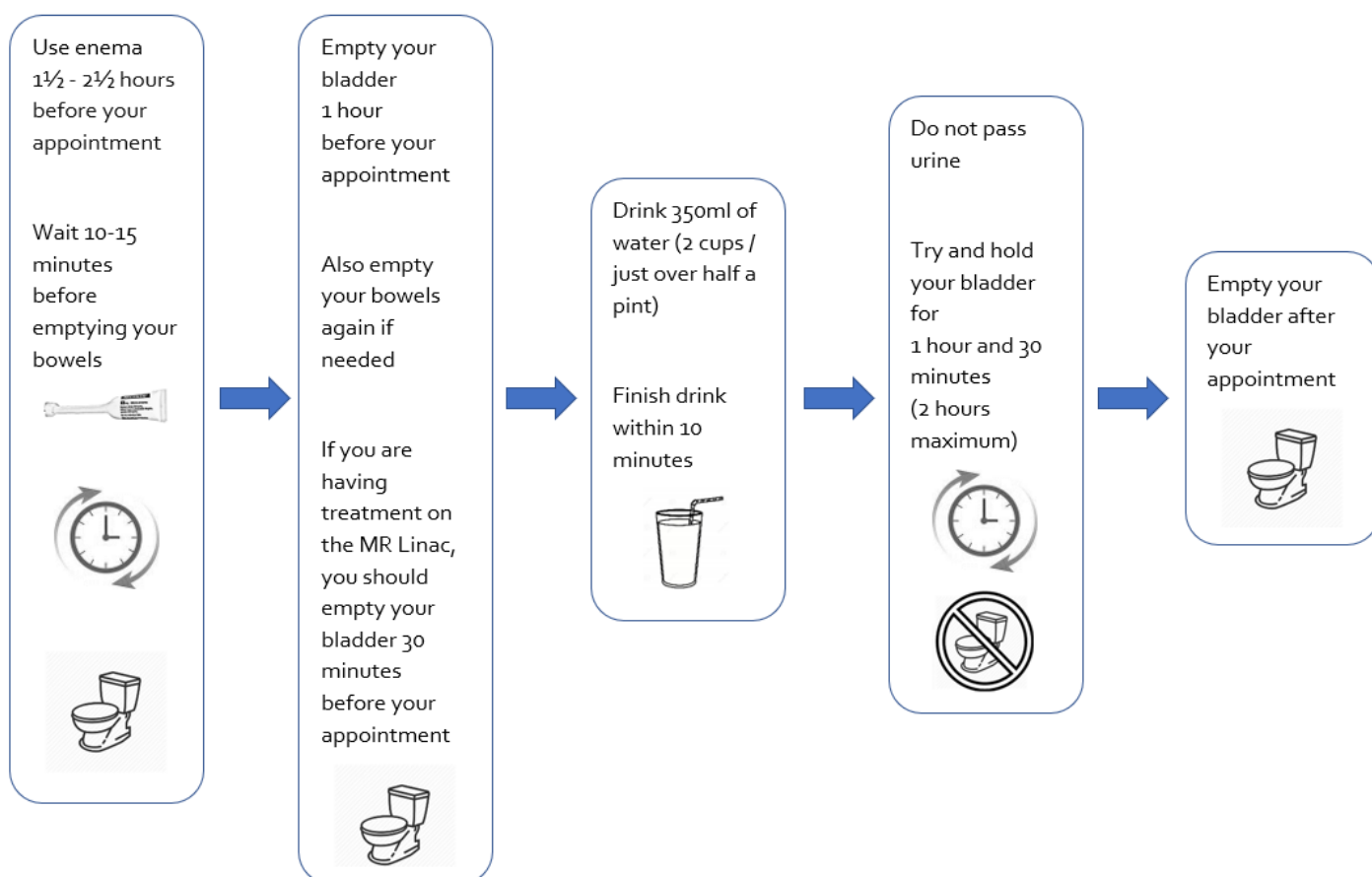
You will probably feel the urge to empty your bowels within a few minutes of taking the enema or even straight away but try to hold on for 10 or 15 minutes. This will give the enema enough time to work properly.

Preparation of the bladder

We would like you to practise at home to make sure you can achieve a comfortably full bladder for your planning and treatment appointments. This can be practised without using the enema.

Empty your bladder and bowels (if needed), then drink 350ml of water (two standard plastic cups of water or just over half a pint) within 10 minutes. Try to keep mobile during the following hour so that any gas in your bowel can be released. See if you are still comfortable **one hour** from when you started drinking.

Ideally, you should still be reasonably comfortable for another 30–60 minutes (making a total time, without emptying your bladder, of 1.5–2 hours). This allows extra time for any delays and will lessen any anxiety you may experience. As soon as you have had your scan or treatment, you will be able to empty your bladder. **We suggest:**



N.B. For patients having radiotherapy treatment on the **MR Linac**, the pre-treatment staff will advise you at your planning appointment regarding specific drinking times.

What happens if I cannot hold a full bladder?

If you are not comfortable at the end of one hour, then we suggest you try again later or on another day. Try to hold 350ml of water for 45 minutes. Remember to empty your bladder before you start drinking. (Some men find it easier to empty their bladder if they stand up to pass urine).



Planning CT scan

Please use your enema at home prior to attending the hospital. We ask you to arrive one hour before your scan to allow time to drink the water. The radiographers will discuss with you the time to start your preparation and the time of your scan. They will ask you to empty your bladder, then drink the water. During this time, please keep mobile and move around if possible.

If at any point you feel that you cannot hold your bladder for another 10–15 minutes, please let the receptionists know.

Daily treatment

To have an empty bowel for your radiotherapy, you can use the enema between 1.5 and 2.5 hours before your radiotherapy appointment. The time will depend on your travel time to the hospital. Many people choose to prepare their bladder and bowel at home, however if you are concerned about the length of your journey you may choose to do your preparation in the hospital.

Before treatment, the radiographers will usually ask if you are 'ready'. If you do not feel you have achieved your ideal bladder-filling, then please let them know. Your appointment time can then be amended accordingly.

Contact details

If you have any concerns or queries, please contact your key worker.

Urology Specialist Radiographer Team 0208 915 4405

Alternatively, please call:

The Royal Marsden Hotline: 020 8915 6899

(available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)



Radiotherapy appointments and preparation

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|--|
| Patient Name: | | | | | Patient Hospital Number: | | | | |
| Preparation for your radiotherapy planning CT scan | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 days before your radiotherapy planning scan use one enema, any time of the day. At home. | | | | | Date of 1 st enema: | | | | |
| 1 day before your radiotherapy planning scan use one enema, any time of the day. At home. | | | | | Date of 2 nd enema: | | | | |
| On the day of your radiotherapy planning scan please use one enema before your journey to the hospital. Allowing enough time before for the enema to take effect. Please arrive one hour before your CT scan, to enable you to fill your bladder. | | | | | Date of Radiotherapy CT scan and 3 rd enema: Please arrive at: Check in, empty your bladder and drink 350ml water. Your scan will be at: (Radiotherapy Pre-treatment reception: Cyberknife Reception: Basement level) MRI arrive at: Your scan will be at: | | | | |
| Preparation for your radiotherapy treatment | | | | | | | | | |
| We want the size of your rectum and bladder during your radiotherapy treatment to be very similar to what you achieved at the radiotherapy planning scan. | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 days before your radiotherapy start date use one enema, any time of the day. At home. | | | | | Date of 4 th enema: | | | | |
| 1 day before your radiotherapy start date use one enema, any time of the day. At home. | | | | | Date of 5 th enema: | | | | |
| On the first day of your radiotherapy treatment, please use one enema (6 th) before your journey to the hospital. Allowing enough time before for the enema to take effect. Please arrive one hour before your treatment, to enable you to fill your bladder. | | | | | Radiotherapy treatment start date: Please arrive at: (Radiotherapy Department: Basement level) Appointment time: | | | | |
| 7th Enema | 8th Enema | 9 th Enema | 10 th Enema | 11 th Enema | 12 th Enema | 13 th Enema | 14th Enema | 15th Enema | |
| | | | | | | | | | |

