

After you finish your short course radiotherapy treatment

This leaflet explains what side effects you may experience after your radiotherapy treatment has finished. It might take a few weeks before you get maximum benefit from the treatment.

Common side effects after radiotherapy treatment

Pain or cough

Sometimes the radiotherapy can cause a temporary (2 or 3 days) worsening of your symptoms of pain or cough. This can be caused by some local swelling in the treatment site.

Skin

Your skin may develop a slight pinkness in the area treated or, if your skin is pigmented it might get darker. Please be gentle with the skin in the treatment area until it returns to normal.

Hair Loss

You may lose your hair in the area that has been treated but it will usually grow back around 3 – 6 months later.

Fatigue

You may feel more tired than usual after your radiotherapy. This is a temporary side effect.

Sleep disturbance

If you have had your brain treated, you can have sleep disturbance 4 to 6 weeks after completion of the radiotherapy. At this time, you may find that you're awake at night and sleepy during the day. This is temporary and will settle again.

Additional advice after radiotherapy treatment

Sun exposure

We recommend that you avoid exposing the treated area to direct sunlight and use a high factor (SPF 30 or above) sun block for at least one year after radiotherapy treatment.



What should I do if I feel unwell in the next few weeks?

If you feel unwell or develop new symptoms after receiving your radiotherapy you should contact your GP or Hospice link worker.

You can call your key worker/clinical nurse specialist, if you have one, or the oncology team (through your consultant's secretary).

If you have medical concerns out of hours you should phone the Royal Marsden Hotline on 0208 915 6899. You or your carer can ring this number 24 hour a day, 7 days a week.

How do I make a comment about my treatment?

If you have any suggestions or comments about your treatment, please speak to a member of staff or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). PALS staff can listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and help sort out problems on your behalf.

Useful contacts

PALS: 0800 783 7176

Switchboard: Chelsea: 020 7352 8171 Sutton: 020 8642 6011

To contact your consultant's team (weekdays only), please phone the hospital switchboard and ask to be put through to your consultant's secretary. Your consultant's name is at the top of this sheet.

www.royalmarsden.nhs.uk

www.patientinfolibrary.royalmarsden.nhs.uk

www.maggies.org

