

RADIATION ONCOLOGY

You are a part of our team and have a vital role to play. We want to make your appointments as stress free as possible.

- Arrive on time for all your radiation therapy sessions.
- Make your therapy team (therapists, nurses and your radiation oncologist) aware of any side effects, including new pains, you may be having during your course of treatment.
- Follow any instructions for your daily treatments that will be given to you.
- Pay special attention to any skin care or mouth care instructions given.
- A goal throughout treatment is to maintain your weight and keep yourself well hydrated. This is especially true if you are also receiving chemotherapy.
- Speak to your provider before taking any supplements or medicines. Some supplements may have an adverse effect with the radiation treatment.
- While in the Radiation Oncology department, your identification will be verified multiple times. This is done for safety purposes. You may be asked your name, birthday and verifying a photo we have in our system. While this may seem repetitious, your safety is our priority.



Navigating through the Radiation Process

1. Consultation

The Radiation Oncology physician will discuss your treatment options with you based on your medical history, biopsy results and prior imaging studies.

If the decision is made to proceed with radiation treatment, your physician will provide a list of orders to be completed by the radiation team.

Some of these orders may require an insurance approval before scheduling.

One of the most important orders is your simulation planning appointment. This will be given to you at the time of your consultation, unless your physician chooses to schedule a follow-up appointment.

Every effort will be made by our financial team to get your simulation appointment cleared through your insurance company by the date of your appointment. If we do not receive clearance from your insurance company by the date given to you, we will notify you prior to your appointment and give you a new appointment date.

2. Simulation (Planning)

Before you begin your treatment, you will need a planning CT simulation.

- This is done to help map out the treatment area
- Determine the dose you will receive
- Reduce the amount of radiation to nearby tissue
- Ensure the radiation is given to the correct area

Simulation preparation

Preparation may include:

- Labs
- Verbal restrictions (ie: diet)
- Colon preparation

We will ensure you have the correct instructions before your simulation appointment.

The simulation may last from 1-2 hours. You will be required to lie down on the simulation table. The therapist will make every effort to ensure that you are comfortable and maintain your privacy.

- You will have imaging done (you will be receiving x-rays) using our CT simulation scanner.
 - This is a limited study used for the planning of your treatment and is not a diagnostic study. There will be no report available.



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- You will feel the table move into position and therapist will explain the procedure step by step as you go along.
- You must remain still throughout the exam and listen to the therapist's instructions.
- If required, the therapist may insert a small rubber catheter into your rectum to help relieve gas prior to the scan.

When your scan is done, the radiation therapist will take pictures of the treatment position. You will be given your return appointment for your first radiation treatment.

- Some patients may need to have further tests or coordinate other appointments. They may have to be called with the appointment date and time of their first treatment.

The radiation oncologist will come in and review the scan before you leave and will be available if you have any additional questions.

Positioning Devices

Some patients will be required to have a mold (mask) made during the planning process. This is for patients who will be treated in the head/neck region.

- These molds are made of wax like plastic, which will be warmed up and placed over your head and neck region. The molds are warm and cool quickly.
- You will be able to breathe through them, while it shapes to your body contour. This mold (mask) will be used daily during your treatments.

Some patients may require an immobilization device for extremities and chest or pelvic regions.

- We use a pillow-like fixation device that starts out soft. When the air is taken out, the pillow hardens and maintains the shape of your body. It remains that way throughout your treatment.

Simulation set-up before treatment

Before your first treatment, you will have a second simulation in the treatment room. This may be done on the day your treatment begins.

- You will lie on the treatment table in the exact position you were in for the CT simulation.
- Images will be taken to help verify your position and to insure the area that we are treating is exactly what the Radiation Oncologist has prescribed.



- Once the Radiation Oncologist approves these set up films, you are ready to receive your first treatment.

3. Treatment Planning

Before your first radiation treatment, your radiation oncologist works with the planning team, to make sure you have the best possible outcome for your treatment.

- All of the images from your CT scan, MRIs (if needed) will be used to help plan your treatment.
- This takes about a week or two for planning to be completed.

Your team works very diligently to make every effort to start your radiation on the date assigned. Occasionally we do have to request additional time and if that is the case, we will call and update you and give you a new start date if necessary.

Treatment Appointments

Radiation treatments are given Monday through Friday, up to a maximum of 8 weeks.

- You will be assigned a start date and time. You must come every day that you are scheduled. This is important so that your treatment can be as effective as possible.
- If you need to change an appointment or you cannot make your treatment date, you must notify your radiation therapist or nurse.
- Please make sure you check in at the front reception area. This will ensure that the therapist knows you have arrived.

Treatments

Once you have checked in at the front reception desk, go to the treatment reception waiting area.

- When the therapist is ready, they will come out to the waiting area and bring you to the treatment area.
- Your identity will be verified.
- The therapist will place you on the table and position you correctly. The therapist will leave the room, close the door and begin your treatment.

The treatment beams are shaped within the machine to form your field of treatment.



- These beams may move during your treatment to allow the radiation to go only where your planning team has designed it to treat.

You will not feel the radiation being administered, but you may hear the machine as it revolves around you several times while you are lying on the table.

While the therapists are not with you during your treatment, the therapists can see you and hear you.

- You are monitored constantly using cameras and an intercom system. You are able to communicate with therapists and vice versa.
- You must remain still at all times.
- If you feel the need to have the therapists come into the room, please speak loudly. They will hear you, turn off the machine and come into the room to assist you.
- Once your treatment is over, you will be escorted out of the room.
- You are safe to be around other people. You are not radioactive.

Weekly On-treatment Visits

You will see your Radiation Oncologist at least once a week.

- The nurse will see you first to perform an assessment.
- Then you will see the Radiation Oncologist and a resident, nurse practitioner or physician
- The day you see your provider, your visit will last at least 1 additional hour. Your provider will sit down with you to assess how your treatments are progressing. This is your time to ask questions. Consider writing down your questions ahead of time.

4. Side Effects

While receiving your treatment you may develop side effects from your radiation therapy.

- You may develop redness to the area treated. This may vary and your radiation therapist will monitor your skin during your daily visits.
- The therapist will notify your provider or nurse if you need to be seen to have your skin evaluated.
- Please alert your radiation team if you are experiencing any urinary or bowel changes.



- Your sexual activity may be affected during radiation treatment. This can be due to fatigue or discomfort to the area being treated. If you have questions please discuss with your Radiation Oncologist who will give you instructions.
- You are not radioactive and cannot pass the radiation to anyone else.
- For women of childbearing age, you must use birth control to prevent pregnancy during treatment. For men, during and immediately after the course of radiation, use protection to prevent pregnancy.
- If you have any questions regarding sexual activity or sperm banking, please discuss with your provider prior to starting treatment.
- If you are receiving radiation treatments and chemotherapy, you may have different or worse side effects. Again, keep yourself hydrated during your treatment.

Fatigue or weakness may develop further along with your treatments. Some suggestions that may help:

- Reduce your activities
- Reduce your work hours
- Take short naps if you are able to

Skin Care

It is important to keep the skin of the treated area clean.

- Use a soft cloth to bathe or shower daily.
- Use a mild unscented soap, such as Dove, Ivory, or Neutrogena and luke warm water.
- Do not use hot water. Avoid using extreme hot or cold temperatures (ice packs, heating pads).
- Rinse your skin well and pat it dry with a soft cotton cloth.
 - Your skin can become sensitive due to radiation treatment. Do not rub your skin. Pass the cloth gently over the area.
- Do not use perfumes, oils, or alcohol products on your skin. Use only 100% Aloe Vera. You can use the natural plant (always scoop out the aloe from the plant) or you may buy it from a drug store. It is ok to use Aloe as needed throughout the day.
 - Aloe can be applied to your skin, by gently patting it on the area being treated.
 - Do not use aloe 2 hours prior to radiation treatment as area should be kept dry.



- If your provider has prescribed any creams to be used in the area of treatment, please make sure the area is clean and free from any creams you may have applied before treatment.
- If you are unsure which products to use, check with your nurse or your provider.
- Scented deodorant should not be used under the affected arm or arms that may be in the treatment fields.
 - Consider using Dove unscented deodorant or cornstarch.
- Wear loose fitting cotton clothing in area being treated. Do not wear tight clothing that can irritate your skin.
- Keep treated area protected from the sun. Check with your provider if sun block should be used.
- We suggest you avoid swimming in a chlorinated pool. If you chose to swim in a pool, make sure you rinse off thoroughly.

5. Follow-up Appointment

Upon completion of your course of radiation, your provider will give you follow up appointments to monitor your progress as well as your overall wellness.



Cancer Support Services

The Cancer Support Services team is here to help you and your family with the emotional, social, spiritual, and physical impact of cancer and its treatment. To cope with cancer you may need more than just medical treatment and we are here to assist. Our Cancer Support Services team includes the following:

- Social Work
- Nutrition
- Psychiatry
- Psychology
- Pastoral Care
- Exercise Physiology
- Music Therapy
- Arts and Medicine
- Massage Therapy
- Acupuncture
- Pet Therapy
- Support and Educational Groups
- EBeauty Wigs
- American Cancer Society “Look Good, Feel Better”

For more information, please speak with your Radiation Oncology team 305-243-8204 or Cancer Support Services 305-243-4129.

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR RADIATION ONCOLOGIST:

- What kind of radiation therapy will I get?
- How many treatments will I receive?
- What side effects can I expect?
- Will I be receiving chemotherapy along with my radiation?
- How long will my side effects last?

After I finish my treatments, what happens



Contact Information

	Miami	Sylvester West	Deerfield	Lennar
Patient registration	305-243-3909	305-689-5691	954-698-3694	305-689-0539
Nursing station	305-243-4229	305-689-1319	954-698-3680	305-689-2700
Nurse Manager	305-243-4228	305-243-4228	954-698-3670	305-689-0444
Chief therapist	305-243-6348	305-689-4315	954-461-2179	305-689-0610
Social worker	305-243-4242	305-243-4242	954-698-3606 954-461-2175	305-689-0620
Nutritionist	305-243-4129	305-243-4129	954-698-3603	305-689-0821
Billing Manager	305-243-4260	305-243-4260	N/A	305-243-4260
Treatment machines				
LINAC A	305-243-4259	305-689-5275	954-698-3620	305-689-0910
LINAC B	305-243-4202	N/A	954-698-3689	305-689-0911
Viewray	305-243-4204	N/A	N/A	N/A
CT simulator	305-243-4226	305-689-5298	N/A	305-689-0302
Gamma Coordinator	N/A	305-243-7278	N/A	N/A



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