

Getting Ready for Prostate Brachytherapy

Instructions to Prepare for your Procedure

What You Will Find Inside:

- Overview of Brachytherapy Appointments
- How to Prepare for Brachytherapy Treatment
- Bowel Prep
- After Your Procedure
- Resources

Overview of Brachytherapy Appointments

Below is a list of all key appointments that will be a part of brachytherapy for prostate cancer.

Appointment	Location	Estimated Time
Brachytherapy Consult & Education Appointment	Waterloo Regional Health Network (WRHN) Cancer Centre Clinic D (Radiation)	1 hour
Pre-Surgical Consult	WRHN @Midtown 2 nd Floor	2.5 hours
Prostate Brachytherapy Treatment Date: _____	WRHN @Midtown 2 nd Floor	5-8 hours

Brachytherapy Consult & Education Appointment

- Meet with the Radiation Oncologist who will be doing your brachytherapy
- Meet with a Registered Nurse who will give you education about brachytherapy, preparation instructions, and next steps.
- You may be asked to sign a consent form for brachytherapy treatment.
- You will be given a:
 - Pre-anesthetic questionnaire
 - Hospital accommodation form
- This paperwork needs to be filled out just in case you need to stay overnight at the hospital. It is rare for this to happen.

Pre-Surgical Consult

- You will be assessed to see if you can have general anesthesia. If you are not eligible your radiation team will follow-up with you.
- This appointment will be booked up to 14 days before your confirmed brachytherapy treatment.
- The pre-surgery clinic will call you with your appointment. You can find a list of your appointments on My Connected Care (wrhn.ca/my-connected-care).

If you are from Hamilton or Niagara Region:

- If you live more than 90 kilometers from WRHN Cancer Centre you may benefit from local lodging at no cost.
- Contact our Access to Care in Oncology Coordinator at: 226-750-1567

Prostate Brachytherapy Treatment

- This appointment is booked in the “Brachytherapy Suite” at WRHN @Midtown (*not in the cancer centre)
- Head to the 2nd floor registration desk; staff will direct you from there.
- Plan to have someone drop you off and pick you up from your appointment. **There is no waiting room for care partners/family/friends.** After the procedure, you can call for your ride home.
- **You will not be allowed to drive for 24 hours after the procedure.**



Photo inside the brachytherapy suite at WRHN.

Next Steps

- The next step in your care is to have external beam radiation treatment.
- About 2 to 7 days after prostate brachytherapy you will have a CT Scan to plan for this next step in your care.
- External Beam Radiation takes place at your local cancer centre (_____).
- It will start about 2 weeks after your brachytherapy is finished. You will see these appointments on your patient schedule (itinerary).

How to Prepare for Brachytherapy Treatment

To prepare for your treatment read the checklist below. **Follow the instructions carefully.** If you have questions contact the radiation therapy department at WRHN Cancer Centre.

Treatment Checklist

What To Do	
Up to 14 days before Date:	- Attend Pre-Surgical Consult - Remember to bring: ☐ All medicine bottles: Such as prescribed medicine, over-the-counter medicines, dietary supplements, creams, and puffers. ☐ Pre-anesthetic questionnaire ☐ Hospital accommodation form - Go to your local pharmacy and: ☐ Fill your prescription for Tamsulosin. ☐ Pick up a box of PICO-SALAX or PURG-ODAN (it should have 2 sachets inside) over-the-counter. ☐ Buy Gas-X chewable tablets off the shelf. - Start Tamsulosin on _____. Take 1 tablet (0.4mg) daily at bedtime.
Up to 7 days before Date:	If you are on a GLP-1 Medicine (like Ozempic, Trulicity, or Victoza) your last dose needs to be taken at least 7 days before the procedure.
Up to 5 days before Date:	If you are taking an SGLT2 Inhibitor (like Jardiance or Invokana): - Do not take this medicine within 3 days of your procedure. If you are taking a blood thinner: - Do not take your blood thinner (_____) for _____ days before your procedure.
1 day before Date:	Start your bowel prep (see details on next page)

Bowel Prep

One day before having brachytherapy treatment you will need to clean out your bowels. This is called “bowel prep”. You will be asked to take bowel medicine that works to make you poop.

These medicines will make you go to the toilet a lot and may cause cramping. It might take a few hours for the medicine to work. Sometimes you will have to go suddenly, so stay close to a toilet while taking these medicines. By the end of your bowel prep, your poop may look like a clear or yellow liquid.

It is very important you follow your bowel prep closely. Your brachytherapy treatment time may be affected if your bowel prep is not done well.



For bowel prep you will be taking: _____

You can buy bowel prep medicine from your local pharmacy. The cost is usually covered for people 65 years of age or older who are on government financial assistance (like Ontario Disability Support Program or Ontario Works). If you do not have coverage you may need to pay out-of-pocket.



Photo of a box of PURG-ODAN



Photo of a box of PICO-SALAX

Bowel Prep Instructions

The Day Before Your Procedure

Morning

- Eat a light breakfast (no nuts)
- Start your clear fluid diet right after breakfast. You will continue this until your procedure is done.

2:00 p.m.

- Start your bowel prep. Take 1 sachet of bowel prep and dissolve it into 150ml of cold water. Mix for 2-3 minutes and drink when cooled.
- Chew 1 tablet of Gas-X.

6:00 p.m.

- Take 1 sachet of bowel prep and dissolve it into 150ml of cold water. Mix for 2-3 minutes and drink when cooled.
- Chew 1 tablet of Gas-X.

The Day Of Your Procedure

5:00 a.m.

You may have 500ml of water/apple juice/cranberry juice if you are booked for the 8:00 a.m. procedure. Then nothing by mouth until after your procedure.

8:00 a.m.

You may have another 500ml at 8:00 a.m. if you are booked for the 12:00 p.m. procedure. Then nothing by mouth until after your procedure.

Follow a Clear Fluid Diet

Tips for a clear fluid diet:

- Make sure to drink at least 2 litres (8 cups) of fluid each day. Pick up the fluids you plan on drinking ahead of time.
- You might need to be near a toilet once you start your bowel prep and won't be able to go out to the store. Wearing adult briefs (like Depend®) can help with leakage or loss of bowel control.
- Drink more than plain water; water will not give you the energy or nutrients you need in a day.
- If you are living with Chronic Kidney Disease or Diabetes and are not sure what to eat or drink during bowel prep, call the healthcare team that helps you manage that disease.

Use this guide to choose clear fluids before your brachytherapy procedure.

Fluids You CAN HAVE	Foods & Fluids You CANNOT HAVE
✓ Clear broth or water with bouillon cubes added (vegetable, beef, chicken) ✓ Juices: Apple juice, cranberry juice, orange juice (pulp free), sports drinks (e.g., Gatorade or Powerade) ✓ Jell-O or popsicles ✓ Coffee or tea (with no dairy added) ✓ Boost Fruit Flavoured Beverage ✓ Water	✗ No dairy (e.g., milk, smoothies, or yogurt) ✗ Solid foods

After Your Procedure

After your brachytherapy treatment your prostate and nearby tissue can be swollen and sensitive. You will need to rest and avoid anything that will cause more inflammation to the area. For 1 week after the procedure avoid:

- Heavy lifting
- Physical activity (running, biking, working out, long walks, or hiking)
- Taking a bath, using a hot tub, or swimming
- When going to the bathroom, try not to “bear down” or strain.

When you go home, you can resume your regular eating habits. You may want to avoid foods that irritate your gut (like spicy foods or high fat meals). It may take a few days for your bowel habits to return to normal.



If you are from the Hamilton or Niagara Region:

Call your local cancer centre to confirm your CT Simulation appointment to proceed with external beam radiation.

Resources

Visit the **J. Wesley Graham Patient & Family Resource Centre** to get a printed copy of resources. Volunteers can help you find and access credible cancer information.

You can also scan the QR Code or click the blue links below to learn more online.

Prostate Cancer Support Group Waterloo-Wellington pcsg-waterloo-wellington.ca/pcsg-ww/	
Prostate Cancer Foundation Canada prostatecanada.ca/get-support/reef-knot-kits	

Use this resource for your information only. It does not replace medical advice from your doctor or other healthcare professionals.



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