



Radiation Treatment Overview Male Pelvis



During treatment, side effects MAY include:

Common:

- Fatigue
- Skin in the buttock, groin and scrotum area may become red, peel or break and cause itching or discomfort in the area. There may be hair loss in the pubic area.
- Increased number of bowel movements or loose and watery bowel movements (diarrhea). There may be small amounts of blood in the stool.
- Feeling like you need to have a bowel movement even if the bowel is empty (tenesmus)
- Bloating, gas, or lower abdominal cramps
- Bladder irritation that may cause increased frequency, urgency, discomfort or small amounts of blood with urination.
- Irritation of the anus
- Development or irritation of hemorrhoids

Less Common:

- Reduced blood counts
- Occasional bleeding from the bladder or rectum (may be large amounts)
- Less control of urination and bowel movements
- Urinary block that may need a temporary catheter

After treatment is finished, side effects MAY include:

Common:

- Increased number of bowel movements or loose bowel movements. There may be small amounts of blood in the stool.
- Feeling like you need to have a bowel movement even if the bowel is empty (tenesmus)
- Bladder changes that may cause increased frequency, urgency, discomfort or small amounts of blood with urination.
- Long-term changes in skin appearance (e.g. darker, lighter or thinner)

Less Common:

- Dry or retrograde (backwards) ejaculation
- Inability to sustain an erection (erectile dysfunction). In some cases, medication or other interventions can help with erections.
- Lowered testosterone levels. This may affect men's energy level, sex drive or muscle/bone strength.
- Pelvic radiation may cause infertility. If you wish to have children of your own, you may want to consider sperm-banking before starting any treatment.
- Occasional bleeding from the bladder or rectum (may be large amounts)
- Less control of urination or bowel movements
- Urinary block that may need a temporary catheter

Rare but can be serious:

- Damage to the nearby organs such as the intestines, bowel, and bladder. The damage may include narrowing, blockages, tearing or fistula (holes) which may require surgery.
- Risk of swelling of the legs or ankles (lymphedema) after radiation. This is more common after major pelvic surgery.
- Increased risk of arthritis in the hips or a pelvic or hip fracture.

- Risk of an injury to any part of the body that has received radiation during treatment. This may be serious, require major surgery and could be life threatening.
- There is a very low risk that a new cancer will be caused by the radiation in the future.

The severity of these side effects will vary from person to person. If you are having chemotherapy during your radiation treatments side effects may be worse. When you begin your radiation treatments, the radiation therapists will give you information to help you manage the side effects. You will also be able to meet with your radiation oncologist during your treatments to talk about any side effects that you may have.

This list may not all apply to your radiation treatment. Please speak to your radiation oncologist to understand what to expect from your treatment.