



your
**TREATMENT
TOOLBOX**

Prepare for radiation

Talk to your doctor about how to get ready for your specific type of radiation therapy, since men receiving brachytherapy (with radioactive seeds) will require slightly different preparation than men receiving external beam radiation. And take the following basic steps to ensure that your radiation treatments are as effective and as comfortable as they can be.

- Since you may be told to come to your treatments with a full bladder and an empty bowel, find out what you should do—how much water to drink and what to eat or not eat—before each treatment.
- Talk to your doctor about the medications or supplements you currently take. Find out what you need to stop taking—and when.
- If you have a simulation visit (to map the area to be treated) scheduled prior to starting your treatments, ask for preparation instructions for that appointment.
- Ask about any dietary measures you can take to prevent or limit bowel problems like diarrhea.
- Ask about screening exams, lab work or tests you may need prior to or during treatment.
- Ask about any changes in urinary habits, libido and potency you may experience—and what you can do about them.
- Ask about the signs you should look out for that could indicate a health concern that needs to be investigated.
- Find out about precautions you should take following your treatments (e.g., avoiding close contact with pregnant women or having children sit on your lap) and when you can safely resume sexual relations.
- Work your schedule around your radiation treatments for optimum comfort. You may be tired following treatments, so allow time to rest or nap.
- Have on-hand soft, comfortable clothes to wear to your treatments. Avoid tight waistbands or belts.
- Ask your doctor about how to care for the skin where you will receive radiation. Avoid using powder or lotion on or near your treatment area.
- If you are receiving radiation therapy in combination with another form of treatment, such as hormone therapy, ask about all the side effects you are likely to experience—and what you can do about them.
- Arrange for rides to and from your radiation treatments.