



Now that you have had your permanent prostate brachytherapy implant

This leaflet provides some useful information now that you have had your permanent seed brachytherapy. You will be given a credit-card sized card with the details of your implant and our contact number on it. You are requested to carry this card with you for the first two years after the implant.

What is the most common side-effect?

The most common side-effect after your implant is the feeling of discomfort when passing urine. This can start in the first few days after treatment.

Before you leave the hospital you will be given medication to take, which should help to reduce some of the side-effects of your treatment. These side-effects may not go completely with medication, but they will slowly improve with time.

What medication will I be given?

You will be given some antibiotics for one week. This is to clear any infection which may have been introduced at the time of the implant. It is not usually helpful to continue with any more antibiotics.

You may be given Tamsulosin, this relaxes the muscles at the base of the bladder and sometimes relieves some of the symptoms caused by muscle spasms.

Some patients may be given anti-inflammatory drugs which are useful if they find it very painful to pass urine. These include drugs such as Nurofen (Ibuprofen), which can be bought over the pharmacy counter. Or you may consult your GP for stronger drugs if this does not help.

These bladder side effects may persist despite the medication; however, they do settle down after some time.

What if I have trouble passing urine?

This symptom is called urinary retention. It may occur if your prostate becomes very swollen. It can happen within the first two to four weeks after treatment but only affects about 10% of patients.

If this does happen to you and you find that you cannot pass urine, you will need to go to your local Accident and Emergency (A & E) Department. Take this leaflet and your card with you and explain that you have had an iodine seed implant.

If they have any concerns ask them to contact us on the telephone numbers overleaf. They will need to pass a small (gauge 14) urinary catheter (a small flexible tube) into your bladder through your urethra. This will allow your urine to drain from your bladder into a bag.

If this is difficult to do and does not work after one or two times of trying, they should not continue without contacting a urology specialist.

How long will the catheter stay in place?

If you have been catheterised, your catheter may be in place for several weeks until the swelling has settled and you can pass water comfortably again. The only way of knowing if you can pass water comfortably is to remove the catheter and see if you are able to pass water without it. This is known as 'trial without catheter' (TWOC).

We recommend that you do not try this sooner than two to four weeks after your catheter was inserted. This allows the prostate time to settle down.

Special instructions for when you are back at home

The radiation level outside your body, from your seeds, is not much greater than the normal background level that exists in the natural environment. This means that the risk to other people around you is very low.

There are no formal restrictions on your activities when you return home, but we suggest you follow the guidelines below for two months after your operation.

- You may be given more specific advice if your spouse (partner) is already pregnant, or if you later tell us that she has become pregnant. Women who are (or may be) pregnant should not sit very close (less than 1 metre) to you. For example they should not sit on the same sofa.

Apart from this, there is no need for you to treat them any differently from how you treated them before your implant. You may greet them as you normally would, and they may stay in the same room as you for as long as they wish.

- Do not nurse children on your lap, or sit very close (less than 1 metre) to them for long periods of time. You may cuddle or hold them for a few minutes each day, and they may stay in the same room as you for as long as you wish (but more than a metre away).

Contacts

Secretary to Professor Peter Hoskin: 020 3826 2436
(9.00am to 5.00pm)

Secretary to Dr Peter Ostler: 020 3826 2438
(9.00am to 5.00pm)

Secretary to Dr Roberto Alonzi: 020 3826 2431
(9.00am to 5.00pm)

Secretary to Dr Rob Hughes: 020 3826 2435
(9.00am to 5.00pm)

Ward 10 (Mount Vernon Hospital): 020 3826 2022
(out of office hours)

Brachytherapy Unit: 020 3826 2629
(9.00am to 5.00pm Mon - Thurs)

Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre020 3826 2555
Mon–Fri: 9.30am–4.30pm

24 hour Acute Oncology Service
Mount Vernon Cancer Centre: 07825 028855

Consent

It is a legal requirement to have a signed Consent Form from you before the start of your treatment.

If you have already been given one of these forms, please bring the completed form with you when you come for your first appointment.

If you have not been given a form, this will be discussed with you at your first appointment.

Identification

Please note that it is a legal requirement for the staff to check your name and details against your treatment sheet and your hospital name band each time you attend. You must wear your name band at all times whilst in hospital.

If you normally pay for NHS prescriptions

People undergoing treatment for cancer do not have to pay NHS prescription charges if they have a valid medical exemption certificate.

To get an exemption certificate, ask your GP for an application form.

Pregnancy/fathering a child

Patients must not father a child during a course of radiotherapy or for some months afterwards.

Please discuss this with your cancer specialist.

If you think there is a chance, however small, of your partner being pregnant during treatment, it is extremely important that you discuss this with your oncologist, radiographer or nurse as soon as possible.

Other help and support

People who have cancer often say that during their illness they experience a range of emotions. Many find it to be a stressful, anxious and confusing time.

If you would like further information about any aspect of cancer and its treatments, including the supportive services offered at the LJMC, please drop in to the centre or call the Helpline.

The staff at the LJMC work as part of the overall team caring for you and include healthcare professionals and trained volunteers. The centre provides a relaxed setting in which to talk and ask questions.

The LJMC is situated between the main Cancer Centre building and Gate 3 (White Hill).

 **Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre**
... supporting people affected by cancer...

Services offered at the LJMC include:

- ① Drop-in centre
- ① Telephone helpline
- ① Benefits advice*
- ① Complementary therapies*
- ① Relaxation classes
- ① Counselling*
- ① Look Good...Feel Better™ beauty workshops
- ① The Way Ahead headwear workshops
- ① Self-help courses

* These services are only available to NHS patients under the care of an oncologist based at Mount Vernon Cancer Centre

Mon-Fri: **9.30am–4.30pm**

Telephone Helpline: **020 3826 2555**

Website: **www.ljmc.org**