



six to eight glasses of fluids a day. You should also avoid alcohol and caffeinated beverages.

Difficulty Swallowing

In order to decrease the pain of swallowing, your doctor may recommend a topical anesthetic, pain medication, artificial

saliva and/or drinking sufficient fluids to keep the throat moist.

Remember that it is important to maintain good nutrition during your treatment.

Be careful with thin liquids like water or juice. They may be difficult to control while swallowing.

Painful Urination

This side effect may occur if you are receiving treatment to the pelvis.

Remember to drink plenty of fluids and avoid alcohol, caffeine, citrus and carbonated beverages.

Always Keep in Mind

It is very important for you to be your own best health advocate.

Follow all your home care instructions carefully.



Learn how to identify and manage effectively the side effects you may experience during your radiation therapy.

You should report any unusual symptoms to your doctor or a member of your healthcare team.

About the Lake Cumberland Regional Hospital Cancer Treatment Center



Lake Cumberland Regional Hospital's Cancer Treatment Center moved into its new, state-of-the-art facility in May 2004. Since opening, the Center has treated approximately 25 new patients each month.

The Center is part of Lake Cumberland Regional Hospital that is in the final stages of a \$55 million expansion and renovation, which includes a new parking garage and five story patient tower.

Lake Cumberland Regional Hospital, a 259-bed facility, opened in May, 1976. In addition to the Cancer Treatment Center, outpatient surgery, sleep disorders and outpatient radiology centers are also featured on campus.

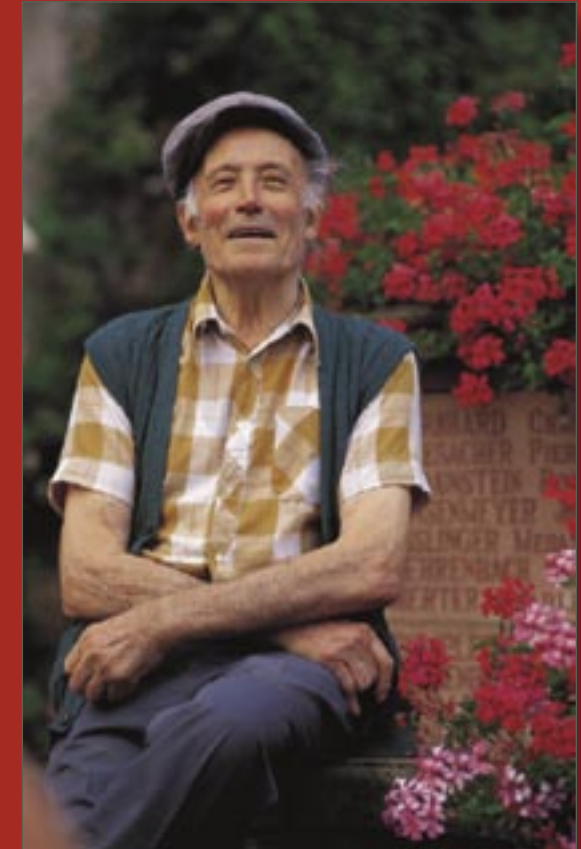
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Managing Radiation Therapy Side Effects



Managing Radiation Therapy Side Effects

Lake Cumberland Regional Hospital Cancer Treatment Center understands that patients may experience side effects during their treatment. We would like to partner with you by helping you understand what some of those side effects may be and how to deal with those issues if they arise.

Side effects from radiation therapy are different for each part of the body being treated. The most common side effects patients experience with radiation therapy are fatigue and skin irritation.

Most side effects will not develop until ten to 14 days into your treatment cycle and they are typically temporary. However, some can last for several weeks after your treatment has ended.

Your doctor, nurse or healthcare team member will discuss the side effects specific to your treatment with you. This brochure discusses many of the side effects that radiation therapy patients experience.

Fatigue

Perhaps the most common side effect of radiation therapy is fatigue. Rest, relax and sleep when you

feel tired or fatigued. Do not exhaust yourself with strenuous activity.

However, it is recommended that you

maintain some level of activity or exercise on a regular basis.



Skin Reactions

Skin changes do sometimes occur during radiation therapy. These changes may include redness, increased pigmentation (tanning) or peeling. These reactions are expected and usually happen about two to three weeks after your treatment cycle begins. The changes are usually



temporary and they should heal in time. Remember to avoid direct sunlight to the area being treated. If it becomes necessary, a special skin ointment can be prescribed for you as a treatment to the reaction.

Do not apply ointments, salves, deodorants, colognes, cosmetics, heat or any self-remedies on the areas being treated during your radiation therapy.

You should check with your doctor or healthcare team member about the use of over the counter skin products since many contain alcohol or fragrance that may further irritate your skin. You should follow these instructions for three weeks after your treatment cycle is completed.

Hair Loss (Alopecia)

Hair loss can occur within the areas that are being treated. You shouldn't lose hair on your head unless you are receiving radiation therapy to the head area. Hair may be lost entirely or in patches.

Hair loss is usually temporary, however there are

rare cases in which it may be permanent. Wear a hat or scarf on your head when you are in the sun.

Dry Mouth (Xerostomia)

Frequent mouth care, especially prior to meals, may provide some relief to dry mouth. Drink plenty of liquids to keep your mouth moist. Chewing sugarless gum or sucking on sugarless hard candy or ice chips may also make your mouth feel more comfortable.

Eat soft, well-cooked foods that contain butter, sauces or gravies. Also, apply lip balm to prevent drying or cracking. If you smoke, reduce the frequency or stop smoking entirely. Some people may benefit from a saliva substitute. You can discuss this with your doctor or healthcare team member.

Mouth Sores

To aid in the prevention or irritation of mouth sores, avoid irritants such as alcohol, spicy or acidic foods, tobacco, very hot foods and commercial mouthwashes. If you wear dentures, remove and brush them thoroughly after all meals. If your dentures are loose, ask your doctor when you should have them adjusted since your gums may remain inflamed during the treatment process.

Nausea and Vomiting

Nausea and/or vomiting may happen if the abdomen is in your treatment field. Your doctor may prescribe an anti-nausea medication before each treatment to reduce this factor. Eating smaller, more frequent meals may also help ease these problems. Remember to drink more fluid as well.

Diarrhea

Diarrhea may be experienced if the abdomen or pelvis is in your treatment area. Your doctor may prescribe an anti-diarrheal medication to help you. Avoid roughage, raw fruits and vegetables, fried or highly seasoned foods. Drink