

# **Testicular Seminoma: Radiation therapy treatment**

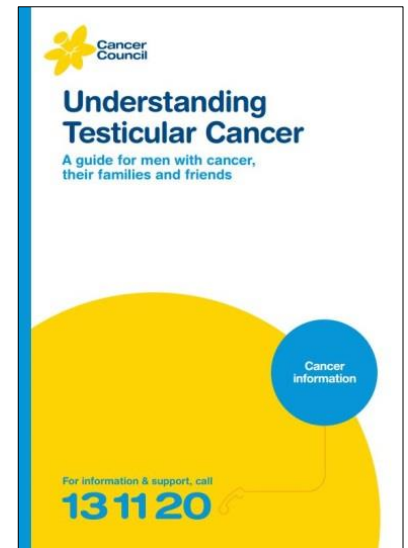
**Information for patients,  
families and friends**

## About this booklet

This booklet is designed to give you information about radiation therapy treatment for testicular seminoma and what to expect.

If you have any questions please speak to your Radiation Oncologist or the other helpful staff at Alfred Health Radiation Oncology during your next visit.

The Cancer Council of Victoria produces an easy to read testicular cancer information booklet. Copies of the booklet can be found at Alfred Health Radiation Oncology or go to their website [www.cancervic.org.au](http://www.cancervic.org.au).



## Why radiotherapy for seminoma?

The cure rate of seminoma is very high with proper treatment. There are several treatment options and radiotherapy may be recommended.

There is a long history of using radiotherapy to treat seminoma. Modern techniques result in practically all men being cured by surgery and postoperative radiation therapy, with little chance of troublesome side-effects. Radiation therapy is given as a precaution because in about 15 - 30% of men the primary tumour has spread. Initially this spread is microscopic; however over time it can grow and become life-threatening. Another option is to do nothing and watch carefully for recurrence and then treat it. The downside of this is that later treatment is more intense and some of the men may not be cured and can die from seminoma.

Chemotherapy has been shown to be as effective as radiotherapy but has different side effects. Your Doctor will discuss these options with you.

## **Side effects**

Below is a list of the most common side effects associated with radiation therapy for seminoma. Side effects may not be limited to the following, so if you have any concerns please speak to your radiation oncologist.

Side effects can be divided into two groups:

- Acute – Those which happen during treatment.
- Late – Those which happen after treatment is completed.

## **Acute side effects**

### **Tiredness**

Most people experience tiredness during radiation therapy treatment. This is usually mild and begins 2-3 weeks after treatment starts and continues 2-6 weeks after treatment is finished.

If you are also having chemotherapy, it is likely you will experience more tiredness, which will last longer after your treatment is completed.

This is not normally debilitating and in itself should not affect your daily activities or ability to drive. However, you may wish to go to bed earlier or take a rest during the afternoon. We strongly encourage you to continue your regular activities like walking or light exercises.

### **Redness of the Skin**

The first change is usually warmth in the skin followed by pinkness. This is likely to progress during the treatment to a darker pink or redness and can resemble mild sunburn.

### **Nausea**

Nausea occurs in less than half of the men we treat. Very occasionally the nausea is so bad that you will feel like vomiting during the treatment.

We routinely prescribe anti-nausea medication for this type of treatment.

## Late side effects

### Fertility

Although this treatment will not affect your fertility, we recommend that you store some semen prior to treatment. We also recommend you refrain from fathering children for six months after treatment.

### Another Cancer

It is known that radiation exposure may cause another cancer many years after treatment. This risk is very small (about 1 in 1000-10000) and is heavily out-weighted by the potential benefit of treatment. If you have any questions or concerns about this please speak to your radiation oncologist

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#### Further information:

##### The Alfred

[alfredhealth.org.au](http://alfredhealth.org.au)

##### Alfred Health Radiation Oncology

[alfredhealth.ro](http://alfredhealth.ro)

##### Latrobe Regional Hospital

[lrh.com.au](http://lrh.com.au)

##### Cancer Council Victoria

[cancervic.org.au](http://cancervic.org.au)

If you would like to provide feedback or request a copy of this information in a different format, contact us at [patient.information@alfred.org.au](mailto:patient.information@alfred.org.au)



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