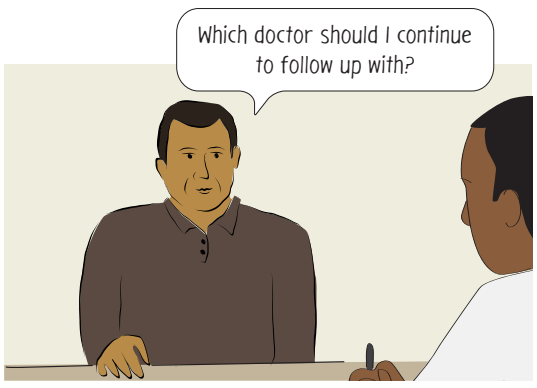
5 After treatment

Assessing radiation's effects on cancer and your body

- Radiation's effects are still at work in your body
- The outcome of treatment won't be known for months
- You may also need a brachytherapy boost
- Side effects (bladder and bowel) begin to subside 2–3 weeks after treatment
- Contact the clinic if your side effects worsen or if you are uncomfortable



FOLLOW UP

4–6 weeks after his last appointment, the doctor checks Phil's side effects and begins to see radiation's effects.

CONTINUING CARE

You should continue to follow up with your doctor(s) to check you PSA levels. They will also monitor any remaining side effects.

Notes

My Information

BEFORE RADIATION TREATMENT

PSA _____

T(umor) stage _____

Gleason/grade group

_____

IF AFTER SURGERY

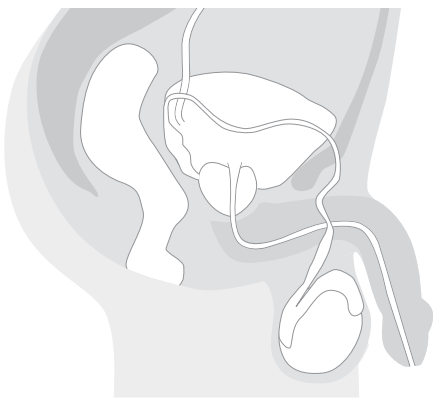
Y N Extracapsular extension

Y N Surgical margins

Y N Seminal vesicle involvement

Y N Lymph node involvement

DOCTOR'S SKETCHPAD



MY PLANNING SESSION

_____ / _____ at _____ : _____ am pm

Before my planning session, I need:

☐ blood work ☐ an enema

☐ a urine test ☐ fiducial markers

☐ an MRI scan ☐ oral contrast

☐ to stop these medication ☐ to drink _____ water by _____

During my planning session, I will receive:

☐ small tattoos ☐ a catheter ☐ an IV

Planning my treatment will take _____ days weeks

TREATMENT INFORMATION

Throughout treatment,
I will see my doctor every **M T W Th F**

Before each visit, I need to:

☐ drink _____ water _____ before

☐ take these medications _____

☐ other _____

I may receive: ☐ a boost

MISSING APPOINTMENTS

- Contact us to reschedule
- Each missed day will be added to the end of your treatment schedule
- Long breaks between appointments could make your treatment less effective

HORMONE THERAPY

You may receive hormone therapy at the same time as radiation.

Hormone therapy may start before radiation and may continue after.

Start date _____ / _____

Duration _____

Months before radiation _____

Related scans I may receive:

☐ bone density scan

COMMON HORMONE THERAPY SHORT TERM SIDE EFFECTS

- hot flashes
- loss of sexual desire
- weight gain

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TREATMENT TRACKER

_____ visits

(____ boost treatments)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45					

This work supported in part by Speed of Light–The ASTRO Foundation. For more information: Dr. Dan Golden info@roecsg.org

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1 Consult

Discussing radiation treatment

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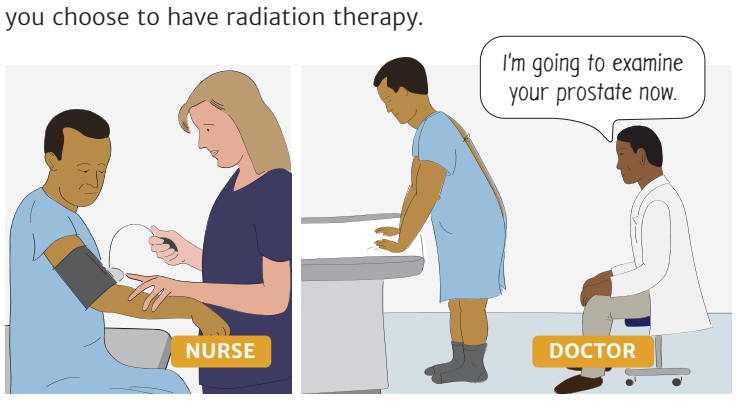
Your radiation treatment pathway

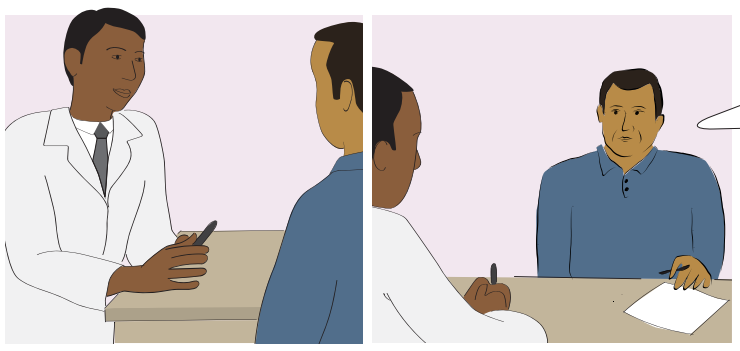
- **Consult** — Understanding your radiation treatment
- **Planning session** — Determining the best treatment position
- **Treatment planning** — Professionals create your custom plan
- **Treatment** — Visiting your clinic daily for radiation
- **After treatment** — Assessing radiation's effects on cancer and your body

Phil has prostate cancer and has decided to receive radiation treatment. He's here for his first appointment.

The nurse and doctor tell him what he needs to know about radiation.

Phil's experience will give you an idea of what to expect should you choose to have radiation therapy.





CARE TEAM:

DOCTOR NURSE RADIATION THERAPIST

Behind the scenes

PHYSICIST DOSIMETRIST

Other members may include medical assistant, social worker, dietitian

What is the goal of radiation treatment?

How is this compared to other treatment possibilities?

How does hormone therapy work with radiation treatment?

What are the most likely short and long term side effects?

I've heard some things about radiation. Are they true?

Can I still work and see people?

WHAT IS EXTERNAL BEAM RADIATION TREATMENT?

A machine called a linear accelerator—'linac'—delivers doses of high energy rays. These rays kill cancer cells in your prostate and around it.

HOW WILL RADIATION AFFECT ME?

Radiation will not hurt. You will not see, smell or feel the radiation beams. In fact, you will not be able to tell that you are receiving treatment.

Most people continue to work, engage with others and live their normal lives while undergoing radiation treatment. Please, however, allow yourself the space to heal and rest.

2–3 weeks into treatment, you may experience differences in your bowel and bladder habits. Other side effects are possible.

If you experience any side effects or notice any changes in your health, ask your doctor or nurse. They are available every day if needed.

2 Planning session
Determining the best treatment position

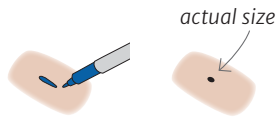
- Duration: 60–90 minutes
- This is also called a "simulation scan"
- No radiation treatment happens today
- Radiation therapists position your body for the best treatment. They make a record so they can put you in the same position every time

Be sure to speak up if you cannot hold your position. The goal is to relax in this position. This is difficult if you are uncomfortable.

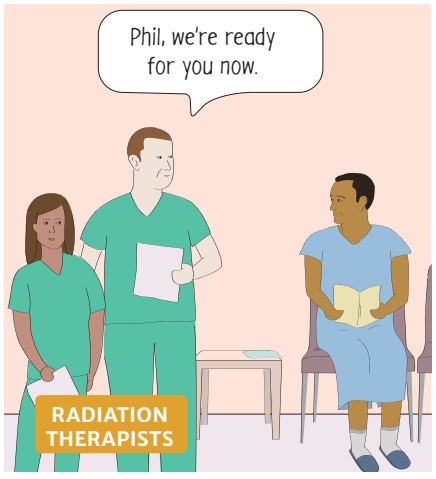
Everyone's position is different.

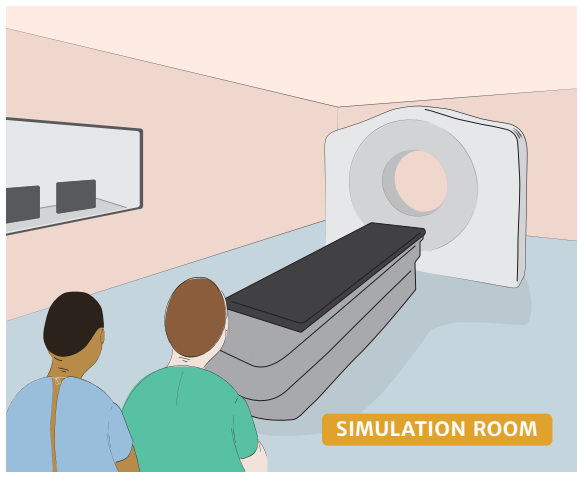
OTHER POSSIBILITIES

- ☐ enema
- ☐ oral contrast
- ☐ IV contrast
- ☐ rectal contrast
- ☐ penile clamp



You may receive these markings during this session or in treatment.





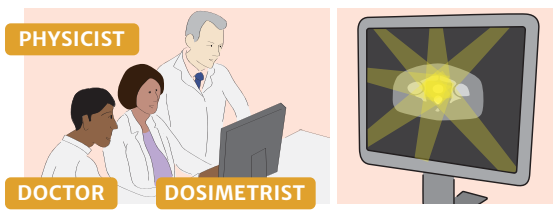
Radiation therapists position Phil with support devices to help him relax and remain still.

They also draw marks on his body to help align him to the radiation.

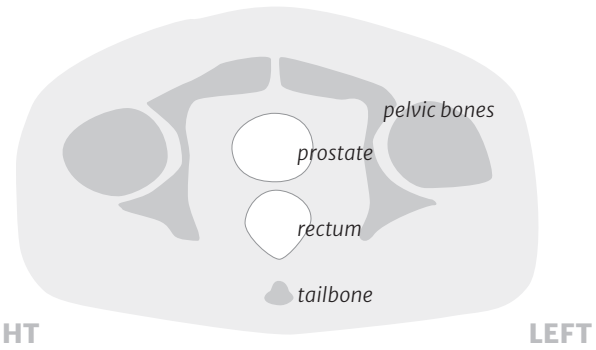
CT scans are taken to customize his treatment plan.

3 Treatment planning
Professionals create your custom plan

- Duration: 3–10 weekdays
- Your plan targets the cancer and limits radiation on healthy tissue
- Your plan is tested before you are treated



DOCTOR'S SKETCHPAD



IN THE MEANTIME

Plan

- ☐ Arrange transportation to the clinic
- ☐ Coordinate with work and others, so you can come to treatments and focus on healing

Prepare for treatment

- ☐ Find a water bottle to use before treatments
- ☐ Get answers to your questions about insurance and/or billing

Seek Support

- ☐ Consider reaching out to friends, family and others
- ☐ The nurse can refer you to other services

4 Treatment
Visiting your clinic daily for radiation

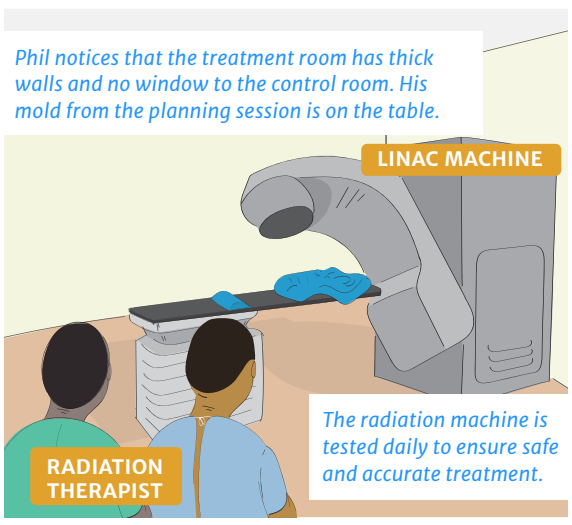
- Duration: 15–45 minutes
- The first treatment is usually the longest
- Before treatment, drink water and don't go to the bathroom until after treatment
- For many, not peeing is the hardest part of treatment
- Your nurse and doctor will see you weekly. You should mention any side effects like changing bladder and bowel habits

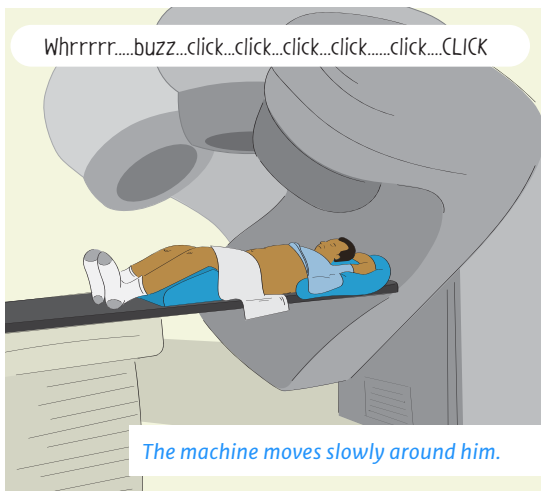
BEFORE TREATMENT

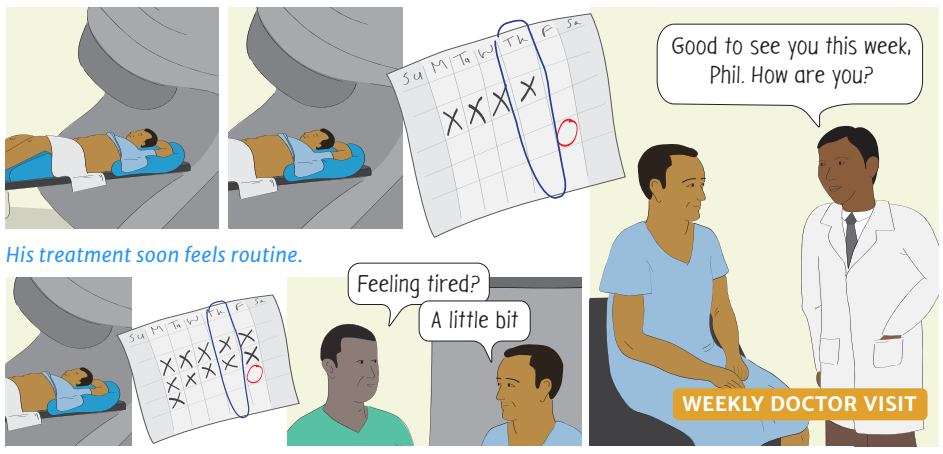
A full bladder moves the bladder and small bowel away from the radiation field.

Try to drink at the same time before every treatment. Inconsistent water levels may delay your treatment that day.

Your experience may be different than Phil's.







Tell your nurse and doctor if you notice any side effects or changes in your health.

There is a 2–3 week delay in feeling side effects.

'BOOST'

You may receive extra targeted radiation treatments called a 'boost.' It will feel just like your other radiation treatments.

A brachytherapy boost is also possible.