

## ON TREATMENT DAY (30-40 MINS)

1. You are required to make two visits daily to the RTC for your treatment; once in the morning and another one in the afternoon, at least 6 hours apart for 3.5 days.
2. You will be led to the brachytherapy room and requested to lie on a couch, in the same position as you were in, during the catheter insertion.
3. The Radiation Therapist will then connect your pre-inserted catheters to the brachytherapy machine. The brachytherapy system will guide the cable-driven radioactive source into the breast cavity via the catheters.
4. The Radiation Therapist will leave the room to deliver the treatment. However, you will be monitored via a closed circuit monitor and be able to communicate to the Radiation Therapist via voice intercom.
5. It takes about 15 minutes to deliver the pre-planned dose. After each treatment, the radioactive source will withdraw from the catheter and return into the machine.
6. The Radiation Therapist will detach the catheters from the brachytherapy machine after treatment has been completed.
7. The Nurse will then clean the treatment site; apply antibiotic ointment and dressings before you leave for home.

## COMPLETION OF TREATMENT

- On your last treatment session, your Radiation Oncologist will remove the catheters. There is usually little or no pain or bleeding. The Nurse will then apply pressure dressing and antibiotic ointment.
- A follow-up appointment will be given to you.
- You are advised to remove the dressing 24 hours after the removal of the catheter.
- After your shower, dry the area with a clean towel and apply antibiotic ointment on the wound then cover it with gamgee. Please repeat these steps until your next follow-up with your Doctor.
- For enquiries, kindly call the nurse's station at Tel: 67728390 or 67728370 (9am to 5.30pm, Mondays to Fridays).

Information is correct at the time of printing (Jan 2017) and subject to revision without notice. All information is intended for educational purposes only and should not be used as a substitute for consultation with your doctor.

## LOCATION AND CONTACT DETAILS



### NATIONAL UNIVERSITY CANCER INSTITUTE, SINGAPORE (NCIS)

Outpatient Facilities	Level @ NUH MC
Radiation Therapy Centre	8
Breast Care Centre	8
Viva-University Children's Cancer Centre	9
Stem Cell Therapy Centre	9
Chemotherapy Centre	9
Cancer Centre	10

(65) 6773 7888\*

(65) 6777 4413

CancerApptLine@nuhs.edu.sg

www.ncis.com.sg

www.facebook.com/NationalUniversityCancerInstituteSingapore/

CancerLine: Free, confidential counselling service

(65) 9722 0569\*

CancerLineNurse@nuhs.edu.sg

\*Mon - Fri (Except Public Holidays): 8.30am - 5.30pm



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**National University  
Cancer Institute, Singapore**  
A member of the NUHS



A GUIDE TO  
BREAST  
BRACHYTHERAPY  
Patient and Family Information

## DAY OF INSERTION



Report to the Radiation Therapy Centre at level 8 of the Medical Centre at:

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

This procedure will take about 3 hours.

## BEFORE INSERTION DAY

Check with your Radiation Oncologist / Nurse if you are on medication. These may need to **STOP** at least **one** week before insertion:

- Aspirin
- Heparin
- Warfarin
- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs
- Traditional chinese medicine or herbal medicine

Your Radiation Oncologist will prescribe the following medication to prepare you for the insertion:

### • Oral Medication:

- **Valium 5mg tablet:** This is a sedation and anti-anxiety medicine. Do not drive for the next 8 hours if you take this medicine.
- **Oxycodone 5mg tablet:** This is a narcotic pain medicine. This medicine may cause constipation.
- **Synflex 550mg tablets:** This is an anti-inflammatory medicine. It will reduce the pain and swelling. Also keep taking this medicine twice daily throughout your treatment.
- **Famotidine:** This is a histamine-2 blocker. It works by decreasing the amount of acid the stomach produces. This medication should be taken together with Synflex to prevent stomach discomfort.

*Inform your Radiation Oncologist if you are allergic to the above medication.*

- **Panadol tablet:** 1GM to reduce pain.

### • Application Cream:

- **EMLA cream:** This is an anaesthetic cream.

## ON INSERTION DAY

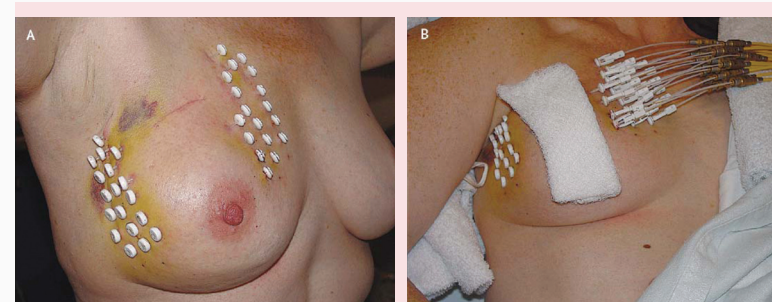
### Before arrival to RTC

You will need to:

- Fast (no food no drinks) for 6 hours before the insertion.
- Wear a button-down shirt and well-supported front-opening brassiere.
- Apply the anaesthetic (EMLA) cream on the skin of the treated (affected) breast after your morning shower.
- Cover the skin with a clear plastic dressing (Tegaderm).
- Arrange for someone to accompany you home after the insertion if possible.

### Upon arrival to RTC

1. You will be assessed by a nurse and required to change into a hospital gown.
2. You will need to consume the pre-insertion oral medication at least 45 minutes before insertion.



Post Catheter Placement

Treatment

### *In the Computed Tomography (CT) Simulation Room*

3. You will lie on the CT couch with your arm of the affected side placed over your head.
4. Your Radiation Oncologist will use ultrasound and/or CT scan to locate and mark the intended treatment site.
5. Your affected breast will be cleaned by a Radiation Oncologist. Sterile towels will then be placed around the treatment site. An anaesthetist will administer the sedation.
6. Your Radiation Oncologist will inject local anaesthesia to numb the treatment area; please inform your Radiation Oncologist if you are allergic to lignocaine, adrenaline and intravenous contrast medium.
7. Your Radiation Oncologist will commence the insertion of 16 to 18 needles into the breast cavity one by one.
8. Your Radiation Oncologist will slide individual flexible plastic tubes (catheters) into the breast cavity via a needle. Eventually, these needles will be all removed, leaving only the catheters in the breast. A series of numbered plastic tabs (buttons) will be attached onto the end of each catheter to hold them in place.
9. At the end of the insertion, a Radiation Therapist will proceed with the CT scan to verify and confirm the placement of every catheter.
10. After the CT scan has been acquired, a Radiation Physicist will proceed to develop your treatment plan with a dedicated computerized treatment planning system.
11. Once the CT scan is over, a Nurse will clean the catheter site by applying the antibiotic ointment (Bactoban) and covering the area with a sterile dressing. You are advised to wear a well-supported brassiere as it would hold the catheters in place.