

Prostate Rectal Spacer Gel Insertion with or without Fiducial Markers

Need to know:

- A Radiation Oncologist from the Department of Radiation Oncology at BC Cancer has recommended that you have this procedure prior to receiving radiation therapy to your prostate gland to cure your cancer.
- Your cancer doctor has recommended Rectal Spacer Gel, with or without fiducials, to help reduce the amount of radiation that reaches the rectum and minimize treatment-related side effects from external beam radiation.
- The rectum sits very close to the prostate. By creating more space between the prostate and the rectum during radiation treatment, the rectum receives less radiation, which means fewer side effects. Rectal Spacer Gel is used to gently push the rectum away from the prostate to create this space.
- Fiducials are tiny gold markers placed in the prostate that help your care team accurately plan and deliver your treatment.
- You can say **no** to this procedure or change your mind at any time.

What Does This Procedure Involve?

Before the Procedure:

- Take antibiotics before and after the procedure as prescribed.
- Purchase and use rectal Fleet™ enema before the procedure.

Bowel Preparation Instructions

- 48 hours before your appointment, begin a low fibre diet.
- 3-4 hours before your appointment time, use the Fleet™ enema rectally as per package instructions.
- Have a light breakfast or lunch before your appointment.

Blood Thinners:

Please inform your Radiation Oncologist if you are on **any blood thinners** and they will provide instructions specific to your medication.

These medications include:

- Dabigatran (Pradaxa)

- Rivaroxaban (Xarelto)
- Apixaban (Eliquis)
- Fondaparinux (Arixtra)

Please **DO NOT** stop taking your Aspirin.

Day of Procedure:

- If you feel anxious, your care team can give you medicine to help you relax. Let them know how you're feeling.
- Lie on your back on the exam table with your legs up in footrests.
- The nurse will clean the area between your scrotum and rectum.
- The skin will be numbed with a small needle using lidocaine (freezing medicine).
- An ultrasound probe will go into your rectum so the doctor can see the prostate.
- More freezing will be given around the prostate.
- **Gold seed implant:**
 - 3 tiny gold seeds will be placed in the prostate using needles.
- **Rectal Spacer Gel (SpaceOAR™ Hydrogel):**
 - A needle will be placed into the space between the rectum and prostate.
 - The gel will be injected. It turns solid as soon as it touches the tissue.
 - The needle will be removed and the procedure will end.
- The whole procedure takes about 20 to 40 minutes.
- You will recover on the exam table or recovery area.
- You will be monitored until it is safe for you to go home.

After the Procedure:

- You can resume your normal diet right after the procedure.
- Recovery from rectal spacer gel insertion is generally fast, with most patients returning to normal activities within **1–2 days**.
- You will need an MRI scan and a RT Planning CT scan about 1 to 2 weeks later.
 - You will receive further instructions from the Radiation Therapy Department about emptying your rectum and filling your bladder before your scans.
- Radiation treatments usually start 2 to 3 weeks after the scans.
- The scans are used to plan your radiation and check that the gel is in the right place.
- Small tattoo marks will be placed on your lower abdomen and hips during the CT scan to guide radiation.
- The gel stays in place during your radiation and dissolves over several months.
- The fiducials remain in your prostate and do not need to be removed.

Possible Side Effects

Common Side Effects (Short-term):

- Mild to moderate pain or discomfort in the area between your scrotum and rectum (perineum), penis, anus, or rectum.
- Numbness or tingling in the perineum after the freezing medicine is given.

Side Effects to Report:

- Blood in your stool for a few days.
- Constipation.
- Feeling like you need to have a bowel movement.
- Pain when having a bowel movement.
- Symptoms of bladder infection: fever, fatigue, burning with urination, urinary urgency and frequency.

Very Rare Complications (Unlikely but Possible):

- Damage to the rectum. This could cause sores, a hole, or permanent damage to the tissue. Sometimes, surgery is needed to fix this.
- Gel, air, or fluid in a blood vessel. This can cause infection or block blood flow to an organ.
- Reaction to the numbing medicine (lidocaine):
 - Nerve problems: Seizures, confusion, dizziness, trouble speaking, muscle twitching, or in very rare cases, coma, or death.
 - Heart problems: Fast heartbeat or high blood pressure.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or experience complications after the procedure, contact your healthcare team at the numbers below:

Abbotsford, Prince George, Surrey, Vancouver, Victoria

- 24/7 Provincial Nurse Line (PNL): 1-833-818-ONCO (6626)

Kelowna

- Monday to Friday, 9:00am – 4:00pm (excluding holidays):
 - RT Telephone Nursing Line: **250-979-6643**
 - Booking Clerks: **250-712-3920 or 250-712-3939**
- Outside these hours, call Kelowna General Hospital switchboard at 250-862-4000 and ask for the on-call radiation oncologist.



Provincial Health Services Authority

Notes
