

## Clinical Practicalities of Chemoradiation

This information sheet includes some questions that you may want to discuss with your healthcare team. Although some general responses are provided, the sheet gives you space to take notes so you can have a reminder of the specific details and information that your healthcare team tells you. Space is provided for additional questions. Keep this sheet with you so that you can review the information at your next appointment and can add additional details if anything changes.

### What is the difference between chemotherapy and radiation?

**Radiation** works by directing a high energy x-ray beam at the tumour and nearby lymph nodes to interfere with dividing tumour cells by either killing them or stopping the cells from growing and reproducing.

**Chemotherapy** uses drugs to destroy cancer cells or slow their growth. This treatment is given through an infusion into the bloodstream in order to reach cancer cells all over the body. Some chemotherapy also act as a “radio-sensitizer” and can make cancer cells more sensitive to the killing effects of the radiotherapy.

*Space to write additional questions or information:*

---

---

---

### How is treatment administered?

Radiation therapy is delivered with a linear accelerator which is used to generate and give high energy X-rays. You will probably receive radiation therapy five days a week for 6-7 weeks. The length of your appointments may vary from 15 -45 minutes, but you will only receive radiation for a few minutes.

Chemotherapy treatments will most likely be delivered intravenously (through the vein), in your arm, at an infusion centre, hospital or clinic. The exact schedule for administration depends on the specific type of chemotherapy you will receive.

*Space to write additional questions or information:*

---

---

---

### How often will I need to go to the hospital/clinic/infusion centre?

Your treatment schedule will depend on the specific drugs that you are prescribed. Your healthcare team will give you a detailed treatment schedule for both chemotherapy and radiotherapy. On days when you receive both chemotherapy and radiation therapy, your healthcare team will coordinate the two treatments.

*Space to write additional questions or information:*

---

---

---

## What tests are required and how often do I need to do them?

Your healthcare team will let you know which tests you will need to have done. Usually, a blood test is done the day before or on the day of each treatment. The dose and timing of your chemotherapy may change depending on the results of your blood test or the side effects.

*Space to write additional questions or information:*

---

---

---

## How will I know if the chemoradiation is working?

A CT scan will be done after you complete chemoradiation and before you start treatment with immunotherapy. You may also have additional CT scans during the course of your treatment with immunotherapy.

*Space to write additional questions or information:*

---

---

---

## Will I need additional medication?

Depending on the type of chemotherapy you receive and your side effects, you may receive additional medications, for example to help prevent nausea or to help you to manage any side effects. . You may also receive medication to help manage side effects of radiation. Your healthcare team will describe these to you.

*Space to write additional questions or information:*

---

---

---

## How will this impact on the activities of my daily life?

Although your treatment may impact activities of your daily life, the symptoms of untreated cancer will have a greater impact. During your treatment you may be unable to drive or work, care for other family members, or engage in some of your regular activities. Ask your healthcare team about how your treatment may impact you.

*Space to write additional questions or information:*

---

---

---

## Are you clear on your treatment journey and comfortable to proceed with chemoradiation and immunotherapy treatment?

*Space to write additional questions or information:*

---

---

---