



PATIENT EDUCATION

Pain during radiation treatment

A plain-language guide for patients and families. Bring this to your visit. It does not replace advice from your clinician.

What kind of pain can happen?

Radiation sessions themselves are not supposed to hurt. Pain during a course is more often from the tumor, a procedure, skin or mouth soreness, muscle stiffness from holding still, or other medicines. A short flare after low-dose joint treatment can also occur. We treat pain as part of care — you do not have to “tough it out.”

What you may notice

- Aching in the treated area that builds late in the day
- Skin tenderness when clothes rub
- Headache after brain treatment, or throat pain after neck treatment
- Old arthritis that is louder because you are less active

First-line care

Use the medicine schedule you were given **on time**, not only when pain peaks. Pair pills with a bowel plan if opioids are used. Ice or heat only if the team says that area may have it — not on open skin. Gentle movement often beats all-day bed rest for muscle pain.

Where CureRays may fit. Bring a list of every pain pill, including extras from home. We will check interactions and kidney or liver limits. Never crush a long-acting tablet or borrow someone else's medicine. Confirm changes with your clinician.

Immobilization — why it matters

Holding still keeps the beam on the target. If the mold, mask, or arm position causes pain, tell the therapists **before** the beam starts. We can add padding or a short-acting pain dose. Immobilization is for accuracy, not a cast you wear home.



Practical tips

- **Write it down.** A 0–10 number and what you were doing helps us adjust faster.
- **Breakthrough vs long-acting.** Know which pill is which.
- **Constipation.** Start the bowel plan the same day as opioids.
- **Sleep.** Night pain needs a plan — do not lie awake bargaining with yourself.

When to call the clinic

- New crushing chest pain, trouble breathing, or the worst headache of your life
- New weakness, numbness, or loss of bowel/bladder control
- Pain that suddenly becomes one-sided swelling in a calf
- You run out of medicine before the next visit, or pain is not touched by the plan

Questions to ask

- What pain is expected this week, and what is not?
- What is my first-line medicine and what is the backup?
- Can the mold or mask be adjusted?
- Who do I call after hours if pain spikes?

How to schedule or learn more

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