

NCCP patient pathway for attendance for radiation oncology during the COVID-19 pandemic

2 weeks prior to attendance for radiation oncology

- The following patients attending for radiotherapy should be advised the best way to minimise their risk of COVID-19 exposure is to cocoon for two weeks prior to treatment in line with public health advice:
 - patients with lung, oesophageal or head and neck cancers,
 - patients having concomitant chemoradiotherapy,
 - patients whose treatment requires any theatre access (e.g. brachytherapy),
 - patients receiving thyroid cancer treatment with high dose radioactive iodine,
 - patients with significant comorbidities.
- The duration of cocooning prior to treatment should take into account the potential benefits and harms of COVID-19 infection and a delay in commencing treatment.
- All patients receiving radiotherapy should be informed to pay special attention to hand hygiene, social distancing and mask wearing advice.
- Patients should be asked to note any COVID-19 signs or symptoms in a diary.

The hospital should contact the patient 24-48 hours prior to date of planned admission to perform a COVID-19 Patient Triage.
If the patient has been diagnosed with COVID-19, please follow NCCP guidance¹

Up to 72 hours prior to first attendance for radiation oncology

The following patients **should** have an RT-PCR COVID-19 test up to 72 hours prior to starting treatment:

- Patients who have any signs or symptoms of COVID-19
- Patients due to undergo a theatre procedure, such as brachytherapy
- Patients due to undergo thyroid cancer treatment with high dose radioactive iodine

The following patients **may be considered** for an RT-PCR COVID-19 test up to 72 hours prior to starting treatment:

- Patients who are due to commence concomitant chemoradiotherapy
- Patients due to commence radiotherapy for lung, oesophageal or head and neck cancers

Any patient who has had an RT-PCR COVID-19 test should not attend for radiotherapy until they have received their results and the team have made a decision regarding commencing their treatment.

The hospital should perform a COVID-19 Patient Triage.

Day of attendance for radiation oncology

- Patients who have any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 should have an RT-PCR COVID-19 and their treatment should be deferred. If treatment must commence or continue due to urgency follow the COVID-19 pathway.
- Other patients requiring testing will be based on clinical judgement.

Any patient who has had a RT-PCR COVID-19 test should not attend for radiotherapy until they have received their results and the team have made a decision regarding commencing or continuing their treatment.

If the patient has any signs or symptoms of COVID-19, they should follow the COVID-19 pathway.

During treatment

- The following patients should be asked to cocoon during treatment:
 - patients with lung, oesophageal or head and neck cancers being treated with radiotherapy,
 - patients having concomitant chemoradiotherapy,
 - patients with significant comorbidities.
- All patients receiving radiotherapy should be informed to pay special attention to hand hygiene, social distancing and mask wearing advice.
- Patients should be asked to note any COVID-19 signs or symptoms in a diary.

¹ Please refer to 'NCCP advice on the management of patients undergoing radiation oncology treatment, in response to the current novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic' for more information