

## High Dose Rate (HDR) Brachytherapy to the Prostate

You are getting high dose rate (HDR) brachytherapy in your prostate as part of your cancer treatment. This factsheet tells you about your procedure and how to prepare for it.

In HDR brachytherapy treatment, your doctor will use needles to put small, but strong, sources of radiation into your prostate gland. Your doctor will leave these in place for a specific amount of time and then remove the needles and radiation source. The radioactive sources kill cancer cells in the prostate. After about 4 weeks, we will also give you radiation treatments from outside your body to kill any cancer that remains.

### Planning the Procedure

**Instructions.** Our radiation schedulers will mail you an information handout and your schedule to help you prepare for the procedure. You will have an appointment at the Radiation Oncology Clinic about 2-4 weeks prior to your procedure. The radiation team will go over the procedure with you and give you prescriptions to prevent infection and help control side effects. We will answer your questions and concerns. You will be asked to sign the consent form for the HDR procedure.

**Anesthesia.** General anesthesia keeps you asleep during the procedure. If you have medical problems that make this dangerous, please discuss this with your radiation oncology team when you meet with them.

**Transportation.** You must have a family member or friend drive you home. We do not allow public transportation, taxis, LYFT, or UBER. The HDR procedure and recovery usually take about 5-7 hours. Follow all the instructions we provide.

### The HDR Procedure

Your radiation doctor will do the procedure in the Radiation Oncology Clinic. Before the HDR procedure, the nurse will start an IV. The anesthesiologist will give you medicine so you feel no pain. The nurse will put in a catheter to help remove urine.

Your radiation doctor will place needles through the skin between the scrotum and the anus into your prostate gland. The doctors use ultrasound images to check that the needles are in the right place. They connect the needles to tubes that will deliver the radiation source to your prostate gland. Once the radiation has been delivered, your doctor will remove the needles. The radiation team will also remove the catheter that drains your bladder.

### After the Procedure

You will go to the short stay surgery unit to recover. This unit is on the third floor of the HCI hospital. Your family member or friend will meet you there to take you home.

If you do not urinate before you are ready to go home, you may go home with the catheter in place. We will give you instructions about how to care for it at home.

You can go home after the anesthesia wears off. This usually takes 3-4 hours. We will give you a factsheet about taking care of yourself at home.