

Your appointments

You will have different appointments: 1 coaching session to check your breath hold, 1 planning CT appointment, multiple treatment appointments.

Diet preparation is needed for all appointments

Coaching session

Before your CT scan, you'll have a coaching session.

Diet preparation is required for this appointment

At this appointment, the Radiation Therapists (RTs) will make a special body pillow for you. You will be lying on your back with your arms above your head. The pillow will help make sure that you are in the same position for all your appointments.

Then, you'll practice your exhale breath holds. The RTs will guide you through this, and you'll have breaks to breathe normally. RTs will use language such as *"when you're ready, breathe in, then breathe out and hold"* and *"breathe away normally"* to guide you through the session.

X-rays will be taken during the breath holds to see how still your organs are.

Planning CT Scan

Planning CT scans will be taken to help us plan your treatment. You'll be in the same position as the coaching session.

Diet preparation is required for this appointment

The RTs will guide you through the breath holds. The machine will only scan when the RTs confirm your position is correct.

Treatment

During your treatment, RTs will guide and coach you through breath holds each day. They'll use a special camera system to see how you're positioned.

Diet preparation is required for all treatment appointments

Questions?

Please discuss any questions with your Radiation Therapist team or Radiation Oncologist.

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Exhale Breath Hold for Abdomen SABR

Radiation Therapy

Overview

Giving high dose radiation to the abdomen area needs careful handling because nearby organs are sensitive. When you breathe, the organs in your belly move.

By holding your breath after breathing out, we can lessen this movement. This helps aim the radiation more precisely at the tumour.

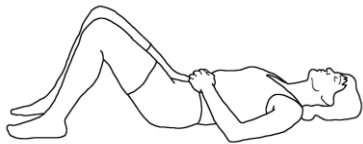
Holding your breath after exhaling (breathing out) keeps your insides still and protects healthy tissue from radiation.

Breath Hold

We will ask you to breathe out (exhale) and hold the breath for approximately 20 seconds. You will be asked to repeat the breath hold during your planning CT and your treatments.

Technique and Preparation

Lie down and relax, breathing in and out. When you're ready, after your exhale, practice holding your breath without taking a breath in (inhaling).



Begin with 5-second intervals until you can comfortably hold for 20 seconds.

Don't try to force out all the air from your lungs when exhaling, just exhale comfortably. Hold that position for the breath-hold.

Practice the same breath-hold while lying down, with your arms resting above your head on a pillow or two.

We recommend you practice your breath-hold a few times each day prior to your education session, Planning CT scan and start of treatment .

What if I can't keep my arms up over my head?

That's okay! Repeat the breathing exercises with your arms down by your sides.

Resources

Two audio/videos are available to guide you through a breathing practice to help you achieve the breath holds.



What is Breath-hold is not for me?

Breath hold might not work for everyone due to differences in body size, shape and internal anatomy.

If you can't to breath-hold, do not worry. There are options available to you. The team will discuss these with you.

Diet Preparation

Why do I need food and drink instructions?

It is important to eat the same amount and same type of food before every appointment to keep your stomach the same size for each appointment.

If you need to take medicine with food, talk to your doctor.

What if I forget?

If you forget to follow your dietary instructions before any of your appointments, we may have to delay your appointment to a later time or another day.

When do I need to follow these instructions?

Before your patient education session, radiation therapy CT scan appointment and every day that you have radiation treatment.

What do I need to do?

For morning appointments:

- Have a light breakfast 2 hours before your appointment
- Do not eat or drink anything else before your appointment
- Your stomach should be fairly empty by the time you have your appointment



For afternoon appointments:

- Have your usual breakfast
- Have a light lunch 2 hours before your appointment
- Do not eat or drink anything else before your appointment
- Your stomach should be fairly empty by the time of your appointment.



Examples of a light breakfast or lunch:

- Eat 2 slices of bread or toast with any spread (for example: butter, jam, peanut butter)
- Drink 1 cup of liquid (coffee, tea, water or juice)

Do not drink fizzy or carbonated drinks (like soft drinks or sparkling water).

Do not eat foods that cause gas like beans, onions and cabbage.

