

# Stereotactic Body Radiation Therapy to Your Abdomen

You are getting Stereotactic Body Radiation Therapy (SBRT) to your abdomen. SBRT is very precise and targets the smallest area possible. To be sure that only the cancer gets radiation, you will need to stay very still.

Since your belly moves when you breathe, you may need help with keeping still. Some people may be able to breathe like normal, but most people will need to try different ways to stay as still as they can. Your care team will help you choose the way that works best for you.

## How will my care team help me to keep my abdomen still?

During your CT simulation appointment, your radiation team will see how much the treatment area moves when you breathe. To help the area move less, they may:

- use a device or belt that presses on your abdomen (called abdominal compression).
- teach you to hold your breath after breathing out (called exhale breath hold).
- ask that you don't eat before your treatments.

## Can practice help me prepare for my appointments?

Yes! It helps to practice these ways of breathing before you come for your CT simulation and treatment appointments. Read how to practice below:

| Abdominal Compression   | Exhale Breath Hold  |
|---|---|
| A device or belt is placed across your belly. This forces your breath into your chest, and uses your chest muscles.   | After you breathe out (exhale), you will hold for 25 to 30 seconds. Do not breathe in during this time.   |
| <b>PRACTICE!</b>  |   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Lie down on your back.</li><li>2. Raise both arms above your head.</li><li>3. Take a small breath in through your nose and into your chest, not your belly.</li><li>4. Hold your belly still as you breathe. This helps keep the air in your chest.</li><li>5. Aim for each small in-breath to be about the same amount.</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Lie down on your back.</li><li>2. Raise both arms above your head.</li><li>3. After a few deep breaths, breathe out normally, then hold.</li><li>4. Aim for 25 to 30 seconds of holding. <b>If you can do this in practice, you will not find it hard to do during your treatment.</b></li></ol> |

When you know which way works best for you, you will use this breathing method during a CT scan. Some patients may also have an MRI. These scans are used to design your radiation treatments.

## How will my radiation therapists know if I am doing it right?

Your radiation therapists will monitor your breathing. If you cough, sneeze, or stop using your breathing method, they will turn the treatment machine off. They will start treatment when you are ready to try again, and you are in the right position. This keeps you safe and makes sure your radiation treatment is done the right way.

## What if I just can't do these breathing methods?

You will still get your radiation treatments. Your radiation team will find another way to design your treatments that works for you.