



Radiation Therapy: What You Need to Know

It is helpful to understand how radiation therapy is different from chemotherapy for breast cancer.

Radiation Does Not Cause Scalp Hair Loss

- Radiation therapy to the breast area does not cause you to lose your scalp hair.
- Radiation therapy can cause hair loss to the area that receives radiation, but it does not impact the scalp hair unless radiation is given to the head.

Radiation Does Not Cause Nausea and Vomiting

- Radiation, unlike chemotherapy, does not have the side effect of nausea and vomiting.

Radiation Does Not Require Pre-Meds

- Radiation, unlike chemotherapy, does not require medication before treatment. Therefore, you can drive yourself to and from treatment because you will not receive any sedating medications.

Receiving Radiation is Not Painful

- Receiving external radiation is painless. The most discomfort experienced comes from having to lie still during treatment. Some patients report a slight warming and tingling sensation during the treatment.
- Radiation therapy can cause side effects that may cause the skin to become dry, sore, itch and feel warm similar to a sunburn. Occasionally, the skin may form blisters that burst open and expose sensitive skin just like those after a sunburn that causes blistering.

Radiation Therapy Does Not Make You Radioactive

- When you leave the treatment session, you are not radioactive. You can be around people without any fear.

Radiation Therapy Does Not Cause Your Weight To Change

- Unlike chemotherapy or hormonal therapy, radiation therapy has no impact on your body weight.

Additional Information:
