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easy  
read  
Australia

# Radiotherapy



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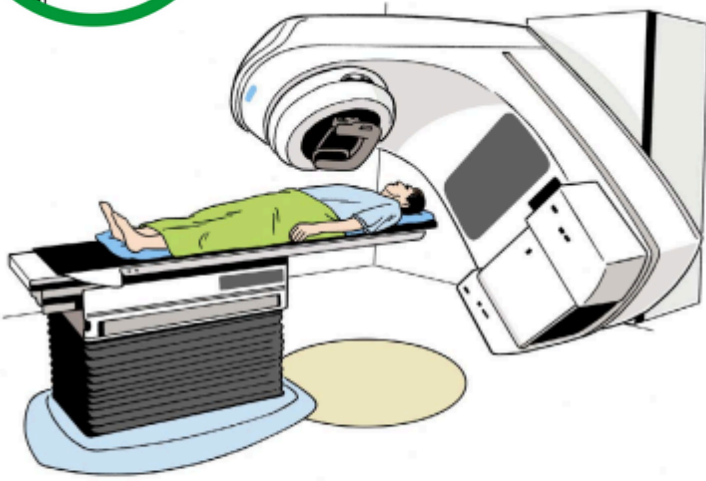
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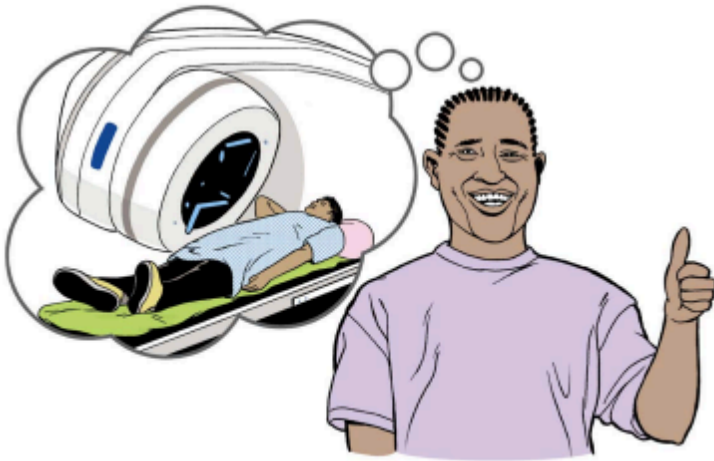




# About this easy read booklet



This booklet is about having radiotherapy.



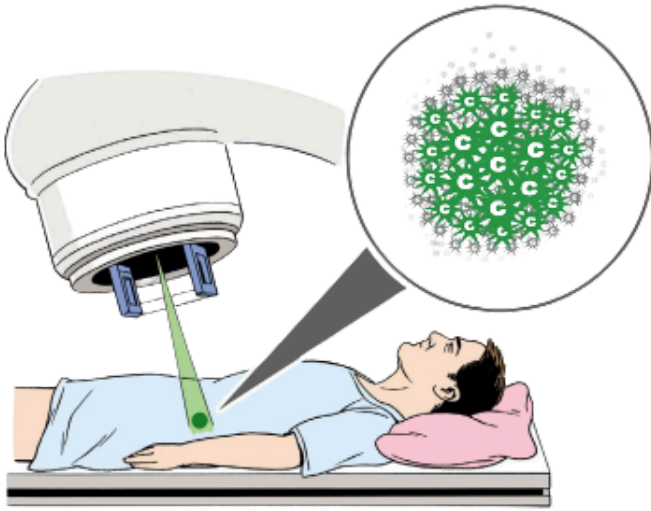
You can learn about what will happen when you go to hospital for radiotherapy.



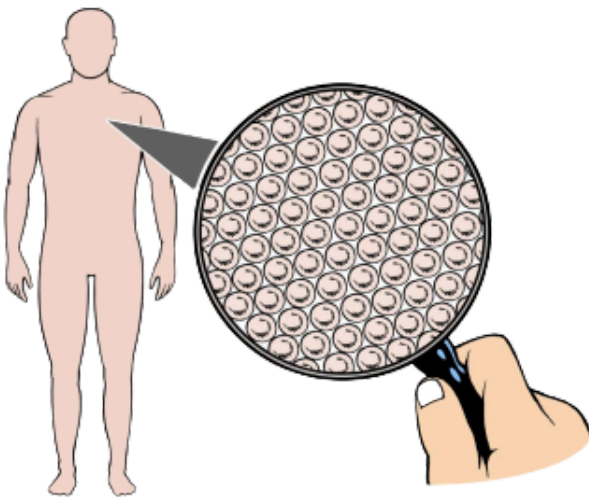
If you are worried about your health, you should talk to a doctor or nurse.



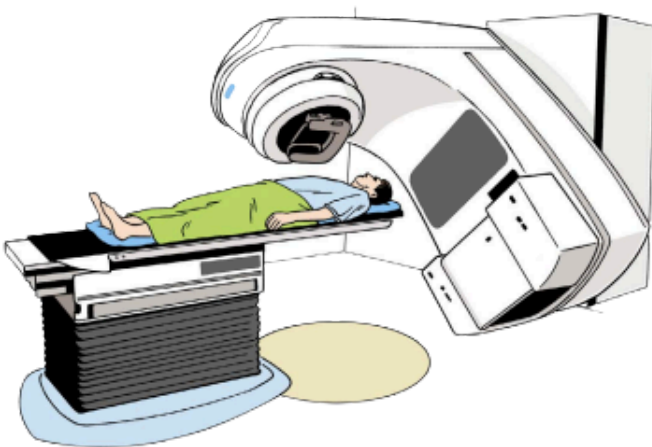
# Radiotherapy



**Radiotherapy** uses strong x-rays to kill cancer **cells**. It can be used on many types of cancer. **X-rays** are powerful rays or beams that can be used to treat cancer.



**Cells** are the tiny building blocks that make up people's bodies.

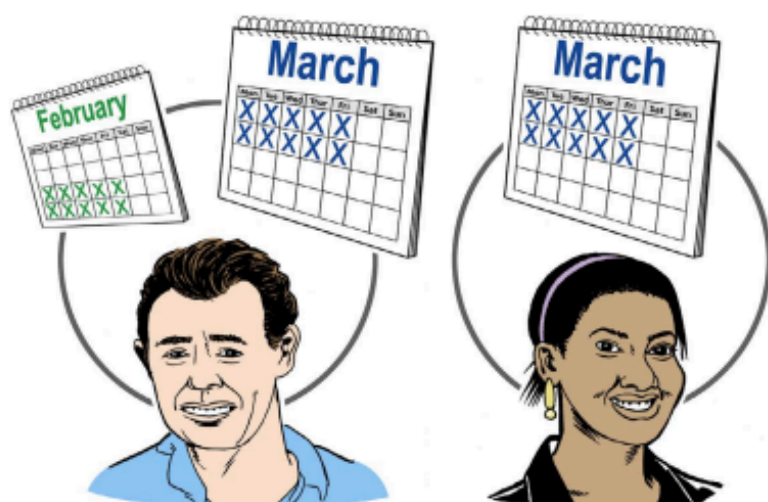


**Radiotherapy** is given by a machine. This sends x-rays to the part of your body where the cancer has been found.





Most people will have radiotherapy as a day patient. This means you can go home after your treatment. You do not stay in the hospital overnight.



The number of treatments you have will depend on what kind of cancer you have. Every person will be different.



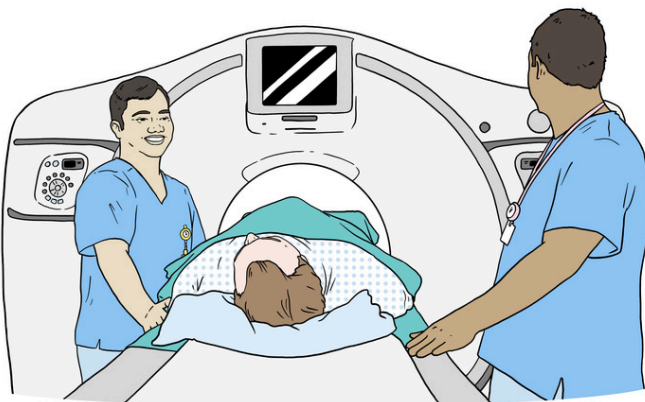
# What happens



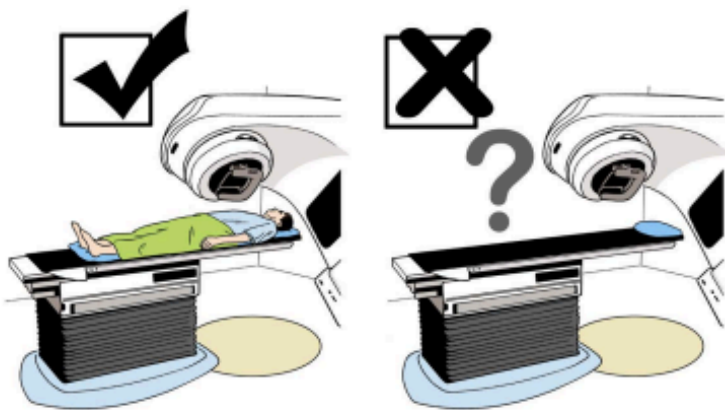
You will have your treatment in the radiotherapy department of the hospital.



It will be done by a person called a radiotherapist.



Before you have radiotherapy, you will need to come to the radiotherapy department for a CT scan. This takes a picture of the inside of your body. This is to plan where on your body you will have the radiotherapy.



It is very important to go to every treatment. If you miss one, it may not work as well. If you do not feel well enough to go for your radiotherapy, call the hospital for advice.



If you have a long way to travel each day for your treatment, ask the person who gives you support if they can drive you to the hospital.

Some hospitals provide transport. Charities and support groups sometimes do this too.



There may be accommodation available close to the hospital if you live far away.



Ask the staff in the radiotherapy department about this.





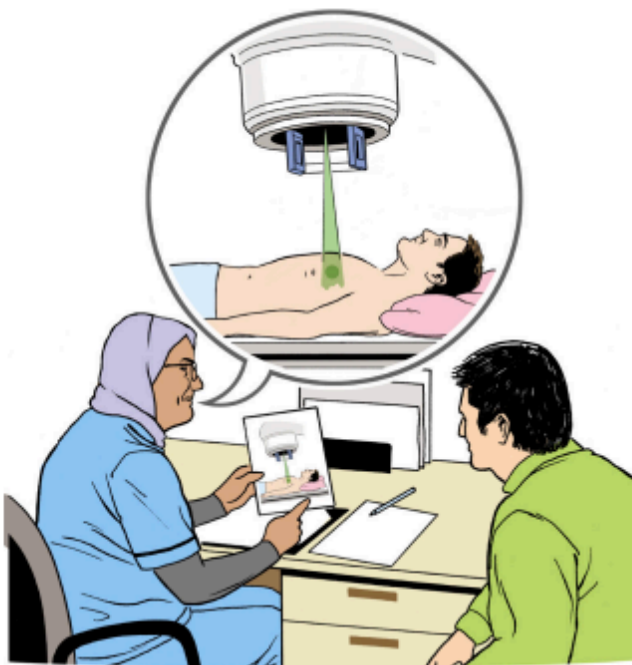
Radiotherapy can make you feel very tired. It could help to take the person who gives you support when you come for treatments.



Before you start your treatment you will be asked to give your **consent**.



Giving your **consent** means that you understand why you need treatment and say it is OK to have it. You can also decide that you don't want to have treatment.



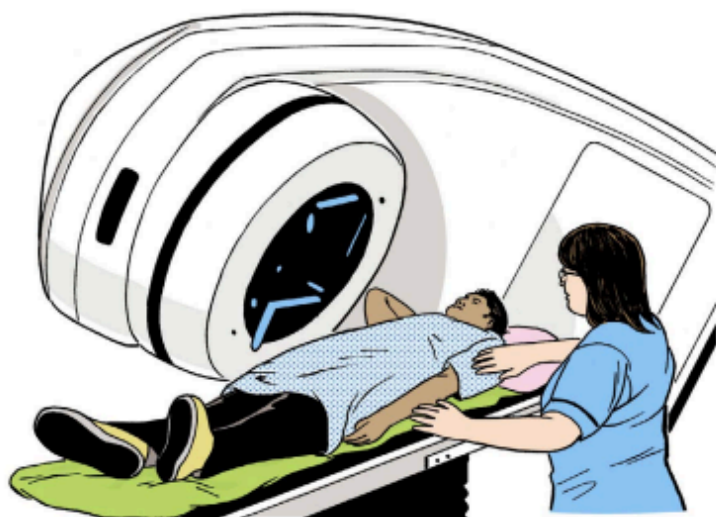
Before your first treatment, the radiotherapist will tell you what you will see and hear during the treatment.



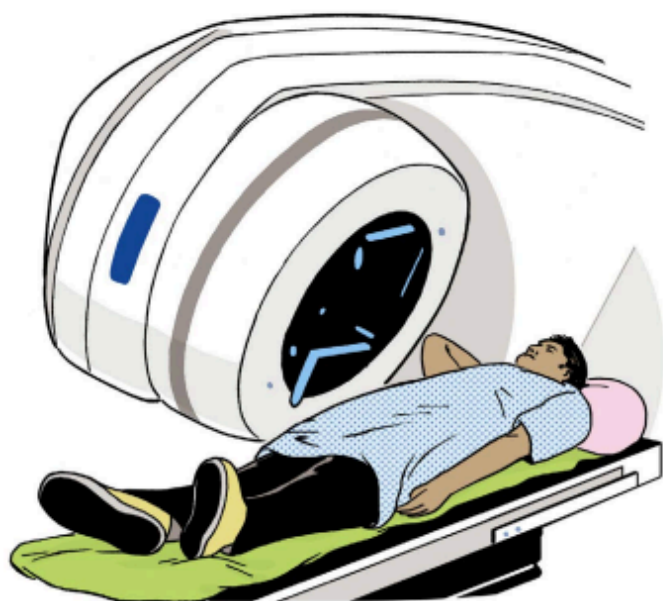
It is good to ask any questions and talk about anything that is worrying you.



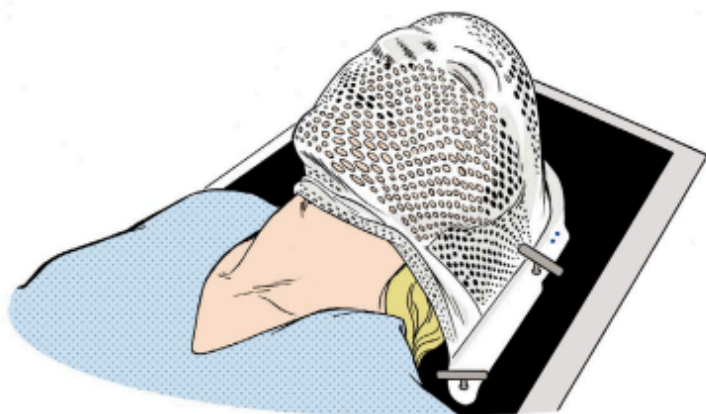
You may be able to go and see the radiotherapy department before your treatment, so that you know what will happen.



When you come for your treatment, the radiotherapist will help you to lie down in the right position.



You will then have to keep very still while the radiotherapy is happening.

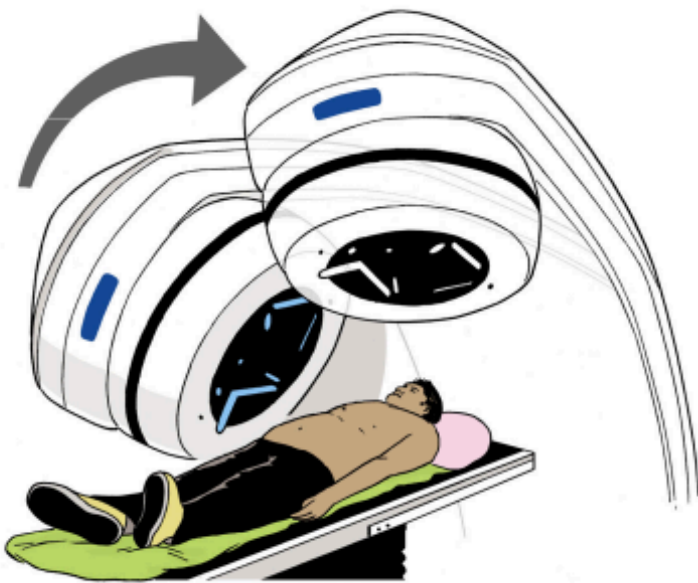


If you are having radiotherapy on your head, you might have to wear a special mask on your face to help you keep still. You can breathe normally while you are wearing the mask.

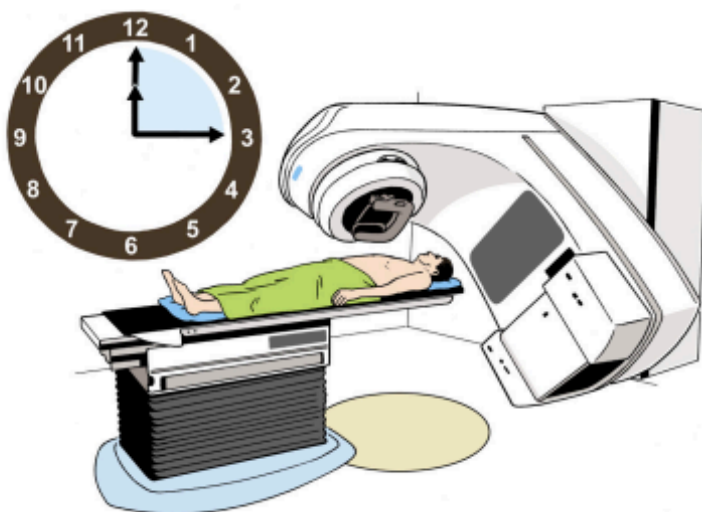


The radiotherapist will then leave the room. This protects them from the high energy rays.

But you can still talk to them if you need to.

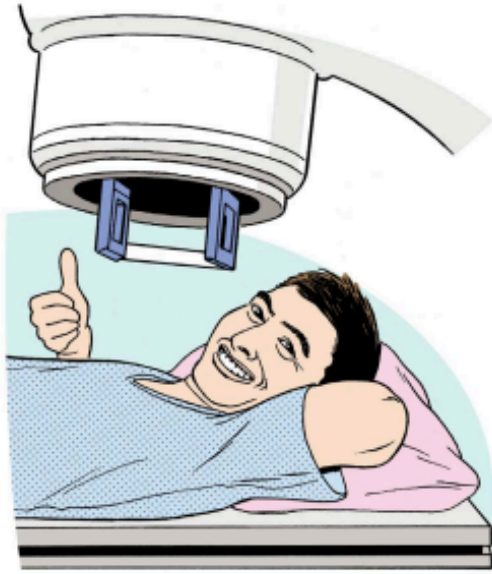


The radiotherapy machine might move around to give you treatment from different directions.

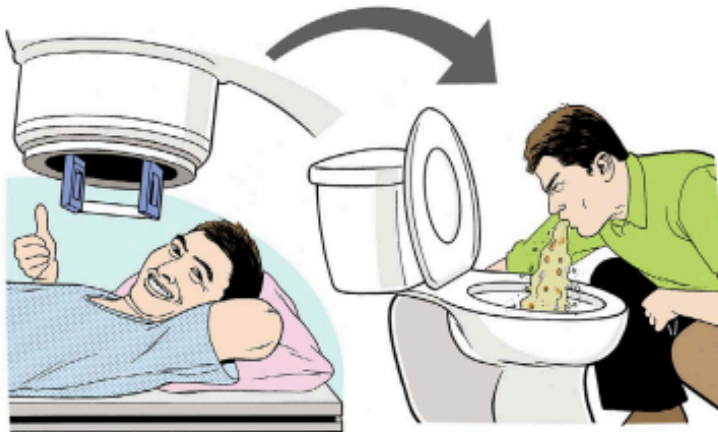


Try not to worry about the noise the machine makes. The whole treatment usually takes 10 to 15 minutes.

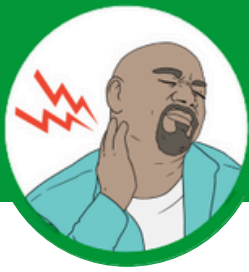




The treatment does not hurt.



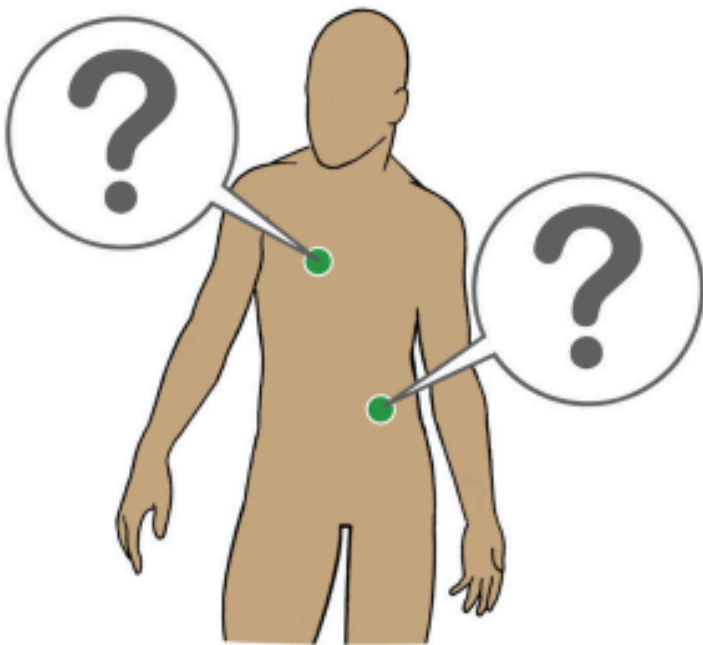
But it can cause some **side effects**. These are things that happen because of the treatment, like feeling tired or sick.



# Side effects of radiotherapy



**Side effects** are unwanted effects caused by **radiotherapy**, like feeling tired or sick.

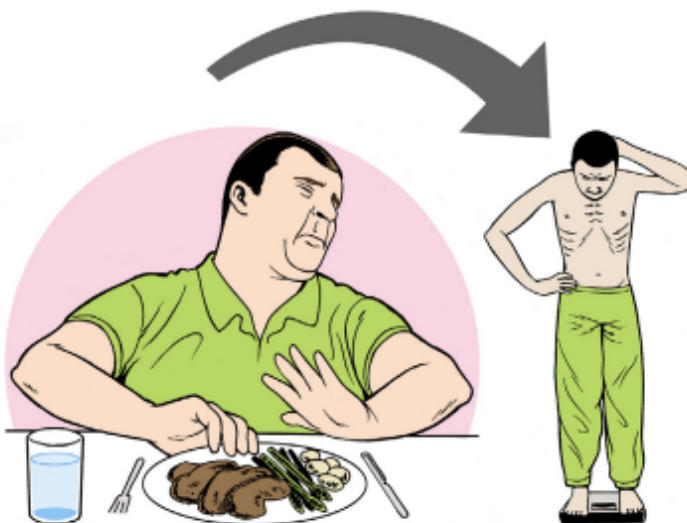


The side effects you get can depend on which part of the body is treated. Your doctor or nurse can tell you what to expect.

You may get some of these side effects:



- You may feel very tired.



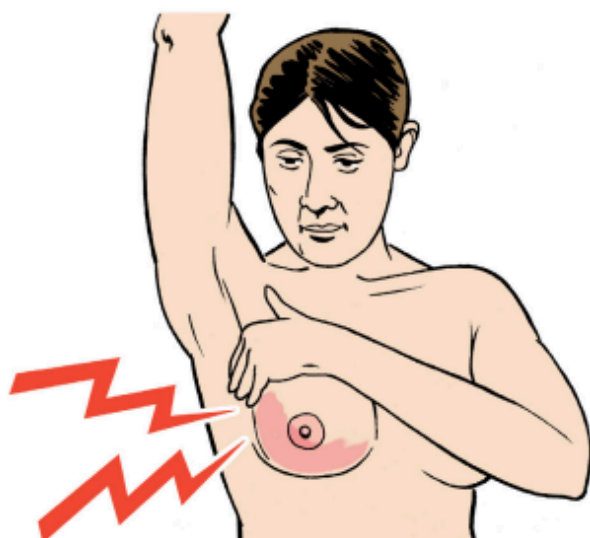
- You may **lose your appetite**.  
This is where you do not feel as hungry as you used to and you may lose weight.



- You may feel or be sick.



- You may have **diarrhoea**.  
This is where your poo is watery and runny and you have to go more than usual.



- The skin where you had the treatment may get red, itchy and sore.





- Your mouth can feel dry and you may find it hard to swallow.



- Your body can feel stiff and sore when you try to move.



- Your hair may fall out on the part of your body that was treated.



Remember not all of these side effects may happen to you.



It is important to talk to the radiotherapist looking after you about any side effects you have. They should be able to help.

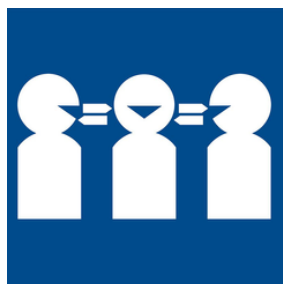


# If you need more information



For more information or support  
in Australia:

Phone Cancer Council on  
**13 11 20**



For language support, call

**13 14 50**

Ask for Cancer Council Victoria.



Or go to the website

**[www.cancervic.org.au](http://www.cancervic.org.au)**

For more easy ready booklets on many cancer topics, go to  
**[macmillan.org.uk/easyread](http://macmillan.org.uk/easyread)**.

These booklets are made in the UK, so some information may not  
be the same in Australia.

Write down any questions you want to ask your doctor:

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