



# Radiation Therapy for Colorectal Cancer

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Colorectal cancer is a type of cancer that starts in the colon or rectum. It usually starts as a small growth, called a polyp, in the lining of the colon or rectum. Over time, the polyp can become cancerous and spread to other parts of the body. The specific treatment plan depends on the stage of the cancer and other individual factors.

### Advantages Of Radiation Therapy:

- » Radiation therapy is a non-invasive treatment option, typically offered before surgery for rectal cancers.
- » Radiation is a quick treatment with minimal or no pain and a short recovery time.
- » Since it is non-invasive, radiation therapy is an outpatient treatment.
- » Radiation therapy will be targeted to a specific area of the body, which allows for precise treatment of the cancer while minimizing damage to healthy tissue.

### Side Effects:

Radiation therapy is an outpatient procedure with minor side effects that may include fatigue, frequent urination or burning, bowel changes, or skin irritation at the point of treatment. Other side effects may occur depending on the specific treatment area.

### Effectiveness Of Radiation Therapy:

Studies have shown that rectal cancer patients treated with radiation therapy have a reduced risk of recurrence and improved rates of successful surgery. Radiation therapy is most often used in combination with surgery and chemotherapy for more advanced cases. It can also be used after surgery to reduce the risk of cancer recurrences.

### Conclusion:

Overall radiation therapy can be an effective treatment option for rectal cancer and can reduce the risk of cancer recurrence. Rectal cancer survivors should continue to receive regular follow-up care, including colonoscopy, to detect any potential recurrence of the disease.

## QUICK FACTS

Colorectal cancer is the **the third most commonly** diagnosed non-skin cancer in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>

Over **153,000 new cases** of colorectal cancer will be diagnosed in the U.S. in 2023<sup>2</sup>

At 5 years, over **65% of patients** are alive and surviving with colorectal cancer

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