

Radiation Therapy Preparation Book



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M E D I C I N E

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ALL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL



For Parents and Guardians

- For your child's first appointment at the Don Lau Family Center for Cancer Care at Florida Hospital Tampa, you will check in at the Main Entrance of the hospital. From here, you will be sent to Registration in the Patient Service Center and will be escorted to the Don Lau Family Center for Cancer Care.
 - For all subsequent appointments, you will check in at the Don Lau Family Center for Cancer Care and can park in their parking lot
- Please plan accordingly for the following appointments:
 - The initial consultation appointment will last approximately 1 hour
 - The simulation appointment will last approximately 45 minutes
 - The first radiation therapy appointment will last approximately 30-45 minutes
 - All subsequent radiation therapy appointments will last approximately 15 minutes
- Children 4 years old and younger will most likely be sedated during their simulation and radiation therapy. Please plan accordingly to have your child's port accessed at their appointments.



First Appointment: Consultation

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This is the entrance at the Don Lau Family Center for Cancer Care.

This is the building where you will be getting your radiation therapy.

For Parents and Guardians

What is radiation therapy? How to explain radiation therapy to your child:

Radiation therapy helps to make the cancer cells in the body go away. Radiation therapy uses a type of light to do this. This light is only used for radiation therapy and is not like the light from the sun or the light from a lightbulb. You will not feel this light.

When your child gets to the hospital, you are going to check in at the registration desk before you meet with the nurse to talk about the radiation therapy.



This is the waiting room.
There is a big fish tank here.

For Parents and Guardians

You and your child will then go to the waiting room until the nurse calls your child's name.

There are magazines, a television, and a computer in the waiting room.

Sometimes it is good to bring a toy or comfort item from home for your child to have before and during their appointments.



This is the room where you will learn about your radiation therapy.

For Parents and Guardians

When the nurse calls your child's name, he/she will go with the nurse to a room that has dolphins and turtles painted on the walls. You can come with your child to this room.

This is where your child will be having his/her consultation visit where the nurse will tell you and your child all about their radiation therapy and what to expect at each appointment.

There is also a red table in the room that your child can sit at and play or color.

Your child might also see a doctor who will do a physical examination.

If you or your child has any questions, please ask the nurse or doctor. They are there to help make sure you understand everything.

After this appointment, your child will get to go home but will have to come back to the hospital again the same week for the next appointment.



Second Appointment: Simulation

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At your next appointment, you are going to be in this room.

This is a machine called a CT scanner.

For Parents and Guardians

During your child's next appointment, he/she is going to be in the simulation room. There is a long bed and a big machine in this room. The big machine is called a CT scanner. The CT scanner takes pictures of the parts of the body that are going to need the radiation therapy. Only your child and the radiation therapist will be in this room. The therapist is the person who is going to be giving your child the radiation therapy. You can wait for your child in the waiting room while they are having the simulation done.

Tell your child that if they feel nervous or have any questions while in the simulation room, that they can talk to the therapist. You can also suggest to them that they can use their imagination and think about all the fun stuff they like to do. They can also use their imagination to think about someone or someplace that makes them feel happy. Sometimes taking big deeps breaths helps too.



The therapist is going to ask you to lay on the bed. It is important that you lay very still.



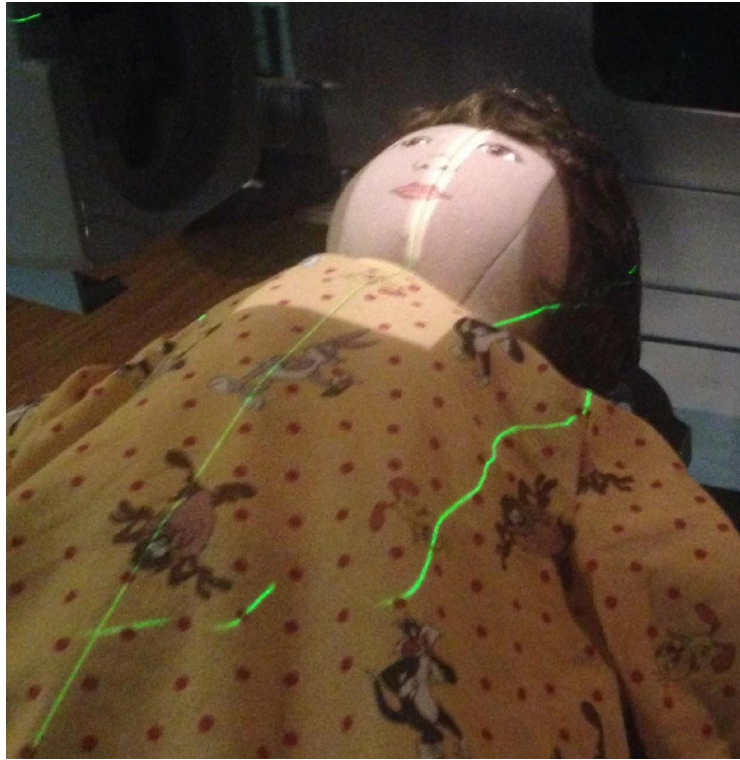
Your therapist will then bring over a cushion.

For Parents and Guardians

The therapist is going to ask your child to lay on the bed. It is important that they lay very still.

The therapist will then bring over a cushion. This cushion looks like a big blue pillow. The therapist will place this on the bed and ask your child to lay on it. The therapist will then press on the cushion and move it around so that it is exactly how the therapist needs it to be.

When your child gets his/her radiation therapy they will be laying on top of this cushion. This cushion will help them to lay very still.



This is what the radiation lights look like.

For Parents and Guardians

Next, the therapist is going to shine some lights on your child's body. Your child will not feel these lights. The therapist will then use a marker to mark the spots made by the lights and will then put a sticker over each mark.

These spots will tell the therapist where to give the radiation therapy each time since the radiation therapy is given on the same part of the body during every appointment. Some children say it tickles a little when the therapist draws the marks on their skin.



This CT scanner is going to take pictures of your body.

For Parents and Guardians

The therapist will then need to take some pictures of the parts of your child's body that are going to get the radiation. Remember, the CT scanner is the big camera that takes these pictures. The therapist may need to move the bed a little in order to get pictures of all the right spots. The therapist will then go look at the pictures on the computer screen behind a glass window.

After this appointment, your child will be coming back to the hospital in a few days for their radiation therapy.



Third Appointment (and subsequent appointments): **Radiation Therapy**

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This is the radiation therapy room.



For Parents and Guardians

When your child comes back to the hospital in a few days, they will be coming to this room. This room is the radiation therapy room.

This room has a bed just like the one in the simulation room. There is also a big machine in this room. This machine is called a linear accelerator. This is the machine that gives your child the radiation therapy. This machine will not touch your child.

You will be laying on a bed while you get your radiation therapy.



For Parents and Guardians

The therapist is going to help your child get on the bed so that he/she can lay down on it.

The therapist will then wrap a seat belt around your child's waist, similar to one that you would wear in a car.

The therapist will also bring the cushion to put on the bed.

Your child can listen to music during the radiation therapy. The therapist can put on this music for your child.

Here is a video camera
on the wall.

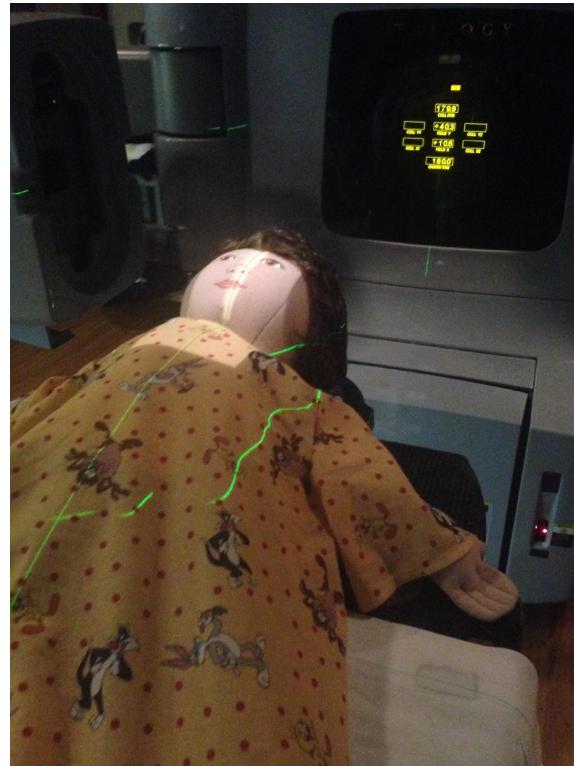
Your therapist can see
you using this.



For Parents and Guardians

The therapist is going to need to leave the room so that they are not exposed to the radiation. The radiation is just meant for your child.

There are video cameras on the ceiling in the room like the one in the picture. These video cameras help the therapist see your child and hear them during the radiation. So even though your child is in the room by himself/herself, they are never really alone because the therapist can still see and hear them at all times.



The therapist will turn on green lights.
These are the radiation therapy lights.

For Parents and Guardians

When it is time to begin the radiation therapy, the therapist will turn off the lights in the ceiling but will turn on smaller green lights. These are the lights that deliver the radiation to your child's body. The therapist is also going to turn on a light above your child's head.

Your child will need to lay very still during this time.

The machine will turn in all different directions during the treatment. Your child will also hear buzzing noises from the machine.

The radiation therapy will last only about 15 minutes. You can tell your child that it is shorter than the amount of time it takes for your child to watch their favorite cartoon.



Extra: Mask

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This is a mask. You will be wearing a mask like this for your radiation therapy.



For Parents and Guardians

Sometimes when children come in for their radiation therapy, they need to wear a mask over their face. This mask has tiny holes in it so that your child can still see, breathe, and talk through it. Some children say it is like a hockey mask.

When your child comes to their simulation appointment, the therapist will place the mask over their face to make sure it is the right size. The mask will feel warm and wet when the therapist places it over their face.

When they come for their radiation therapy, the mask will not feel warm or wet. It will only be warm and wet the first time they wear it at their simulation appointment. During your child's radiation therapy, the therapist will attach the mask to the bed so that it will not move.

At this hospital, your child can choose what they want their mask to look like. There are volunteers who paint the masks for the children. Your child can ask to have their mask painted however they like.



Any questions? Please contact the
child life specialist.

Pictures approved by the Don Lau Family Center for Cancer Care at Florida Hospital Tampa.

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