



Radiation to the Rectum/Anus

When receiving radiation treatments, you may experience side effects, which your doctor will discuss with you. The side effects vary depending on your tumor and the technique used to treat it. Some side effects may go away over time.

Common Side Effects

- Frequent bowel movements and/or urination
- Burning during bowel movements and/or urination
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal cramping
- Pressure or discomfort in the rectal area
- Skin irritation
- Nausea
- Fatigue

Key Reminders

- Do not wash off marks
- Do not use lotions or ointments without checking with your doctor or nurse
- Do not apply lotions or creams **4 hours** before radiation treatment—you may apply them immediately after treatment
- Sit in a cool bath for comfort as needed
- Sit on a soft pillow for comfort if needed
- Use a gentle moisturizing soap, such as Dove or Caress, in the treatment area
- Follow a bland diet if you experience nausea or diarrhea until the side effects go away

If you experience problems related to side effects, please notify your doctor, nurse or radiation therapist. You may need a prescription to help relieve some of your side effects.