



New Patient Radiation Class

For patients who are starting radiation therapy as their cancer treatment

Last updated: September 1, 2017

1



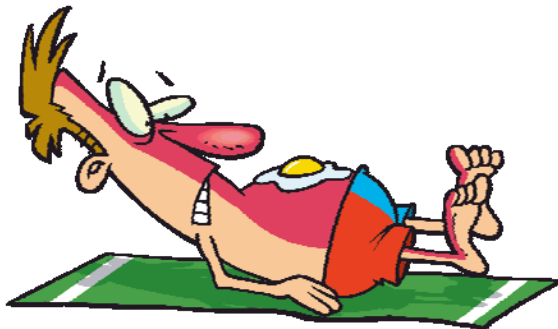
What we'll talk about today

- How radiation therapy works
- Stages of your radiation treatment
 - How to prepare
 - What to expect
- Managing side effects from treatment
- Other resources available to you

3

Question 1

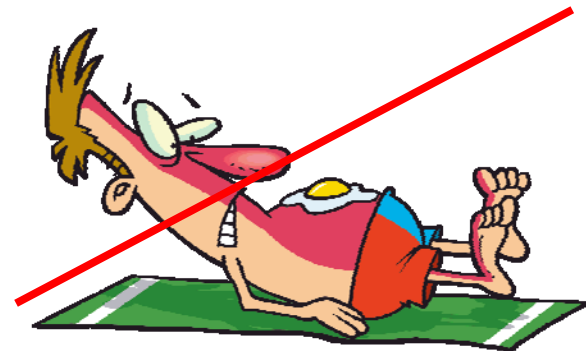
True or False?
Radiation “burns” my skin



4

Answer: False

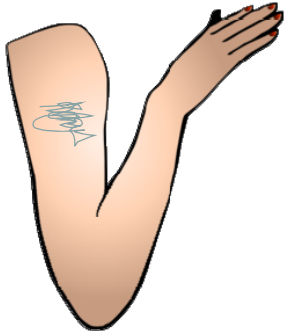
- Radiation does not “burn” your skin.
- Your skin will go through a gradual change as you continue your treatments.



5

Question 2

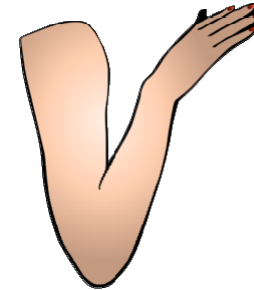
True or False?
Radiation leaves a scar or
a mark on my skin



6

Answer: False

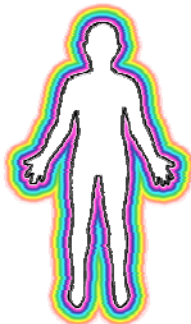
- Radiation doesn't leave a mark on your skin
- Your skin may be a shade darker after your treatment, but it'll probably be noticeable only to you and nobody else.



7

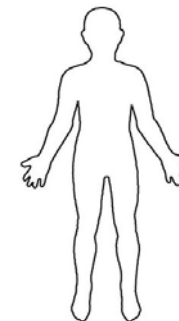
Question 3

True or False?
I am radioactive during or after
radiotherapy



8

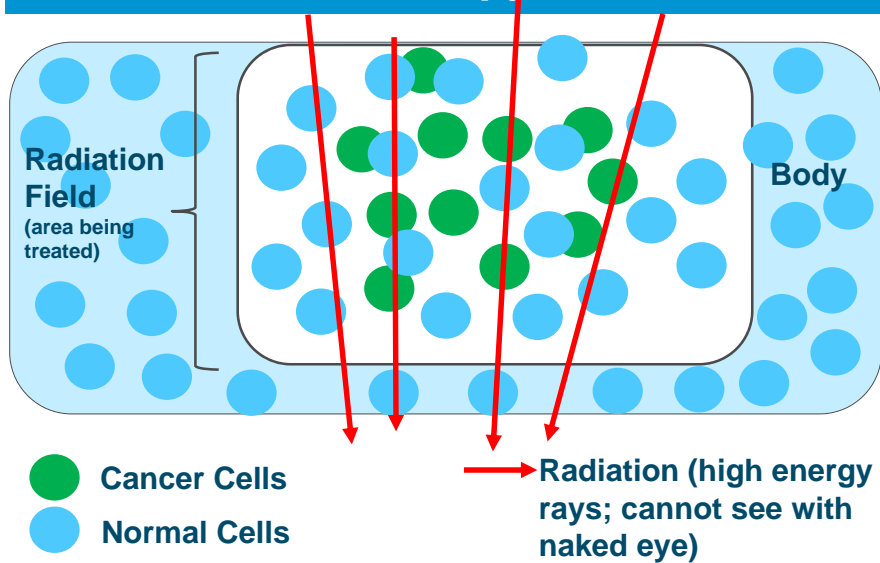
Answer: False



Radiation does not
stay in your body.
You are not
radioactive.

9

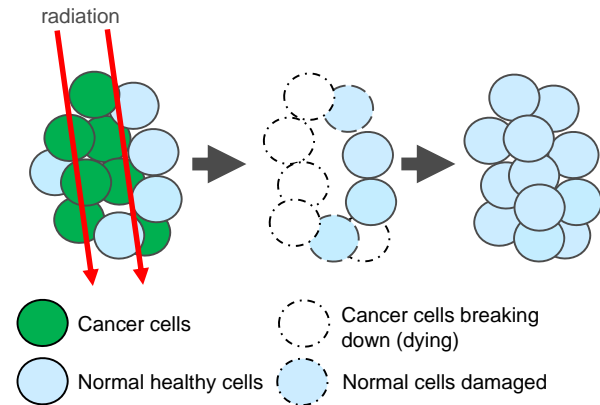
How radiation therapy works



10

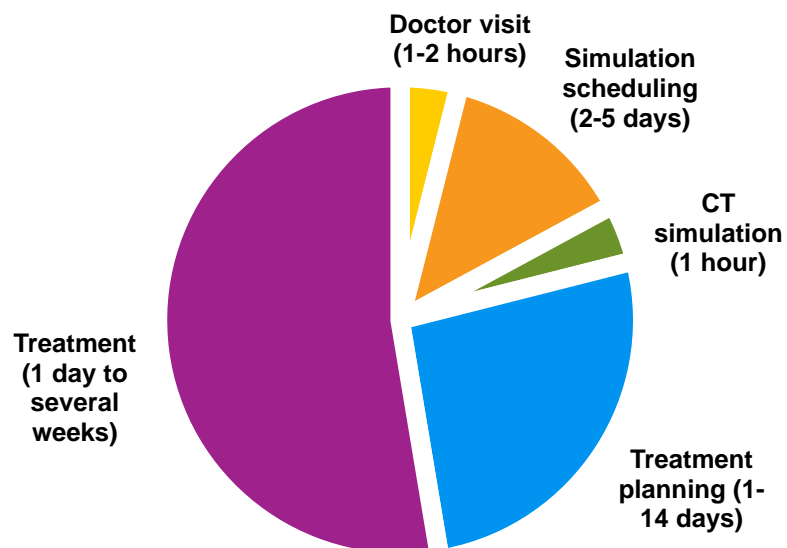
Goals of radiation therapy

- To destroy cancer cells that may be within your body
- Control the growth of a tumour and symptoms
- Stop the cancer from spreading



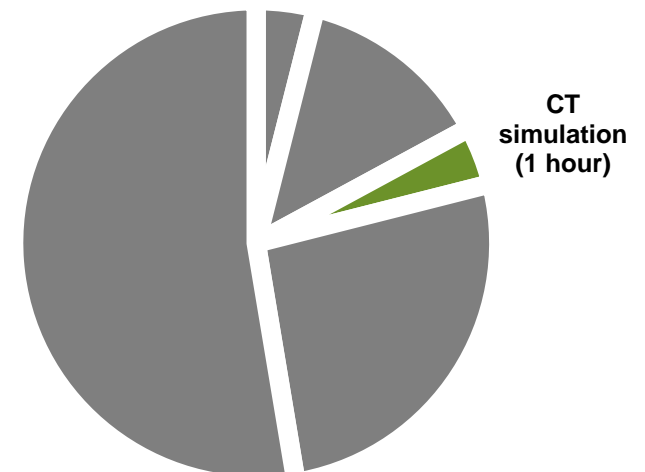
11

Stages of your radiation treatment



12

CT simulation



13

What happens at your CT simulation?

- Take images/scans of the treatment area
- Receive tattoos
- Contrast medium may be used
- May need to follow special instructions before appointment
- Your doctor is **not** usually present at this appointment



CT scanner

14

Preparing for your CT simulation

- No jewellery in the treatment area
- You may have special instructions (ask us if you're not sure)
- **IMPORTANT!** Follow these instructions for your CT simulation appointment and daily treatments
- You can drive yourself to the appointment and back (unless you're too tired)



15

Contrast medium

- Creates higher quality images/scans to plan your treatment
- Only used during CT simulation. Not used during treatment



Flavoured Drink



Injection in arm

16

Tattoos

- Map out the treatment area
- Allows radiation to be accurately aimed at the treatment area
- May need more than one tattoo
- Tattoos will be permanent but very small
- May feel a small pinch



17

Positioning

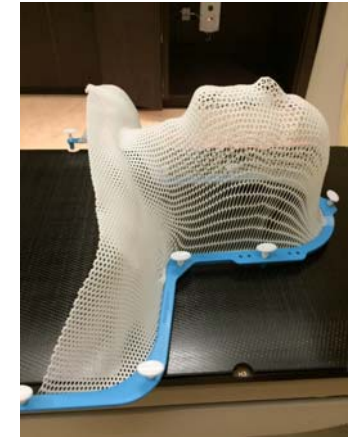
- You will be placed in the exact same position that you will be treated in
- We may use a device to keep you still and comfortable



18

Positioning devices

Masks to keep your head and neck in place



19

Positioning devices

VacLok or cushion



20

Positioning devices

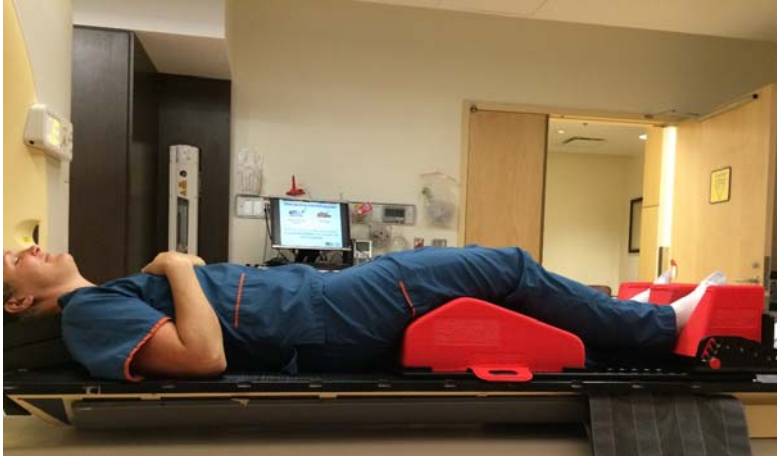
Arm Shuttle



21

Positioning devices

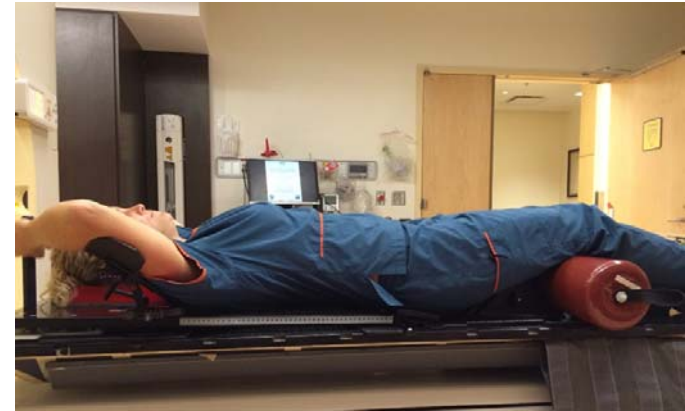
Leg immobilizer



22

Positioning devices

Breast board



23

Positioning devices

Prone pillow

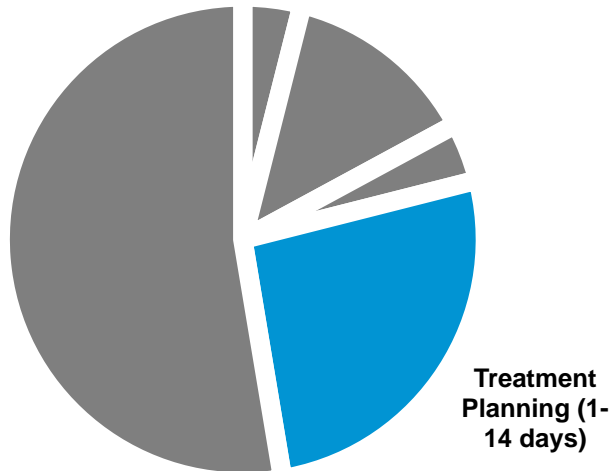


24



25

After CT: Treatment Planning



26

Treatment Planning

- Your radiation oncologist and radiation team design and plan your radiation treatments
- This process takes between 1-14 days
- Many steps and checks



Reviews and checks are what we do, to make sure the treatment is right for you.

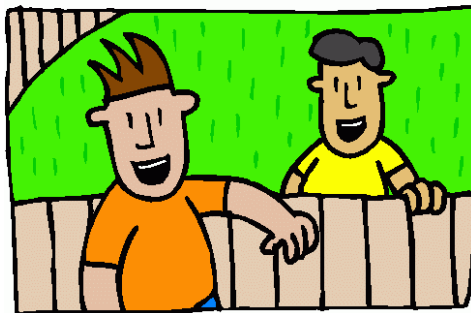
27

Your treatment plan is...

- Made for YOU
- Specific to your health situation

Bob
46 years old
Stage 2
Colon
Cancer

30
treatments



Pete
46 years old
Stage 2
Colon
Cancer

35
treatments

More treatments do NOT mean "a worse case".
Everyone is different!

28

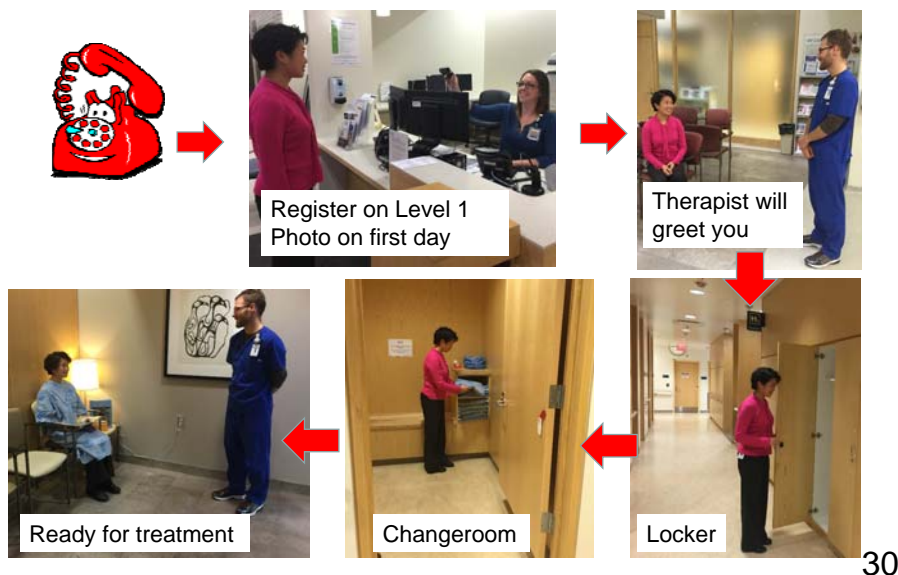
Treatment

Treatment
(1 day to
several
weeks)




29

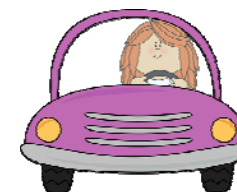
What happens at your treatment?



30

Preparing for your treatment

- Follow same instructions as CT simulation preparation
- No jewellery in treatment area
- Do not smoke 2 hours before your treatment 
- You can drive yourself to the appointment and back (unless you're too tired)



31

Understanding your schedule

	Activity
SMITH, JOHN V0001234356	
6/22/2015 2:45 PM	RapidArc Treatment
6/23/2015 3:00 PM	RapidArc Treatment
6/24/2015 1:30 PM	Review
6/24/2015 1:30 PM	RapidArc Treatment
6/25/2015 2:30 PM	RapidArc Treatment
6/26/2015 2:45 PM	RapidArc Treatment

Treatments are once a day, Monday to Friday

Appointment times will not be the same each day.
Come 15 mins before the scheduled time.
Expect to be here for 30 mins.

32

Understanding your schedule

	Activity
SMITH, JOHN V0001234356	
6/22/2015 2:45 PM	RapidArc Treatment
6/23/2015 3:00 PM	RapidArc Treatment
6/24/2015 1:30 PM	Review
6/24/2015 1:30 PM	RapidArc Treatment
6/25/2015 2:30 PM	RapidArc Treatment
6/26/2015 2:45 PM	RapidArc Treatment

Review day:
Typically will have Treatment first, and then see the Doctor and/or Nurse after.

Expect to be here more than 1 hour.

33

Video: what to expect during treatment

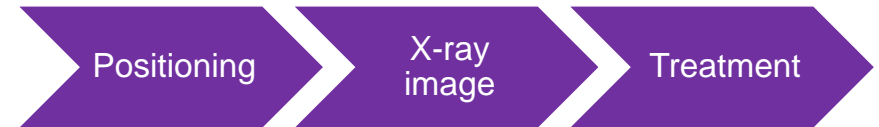


Available online:

<http://barrie.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=571401>

34

What happens during treatment?



35



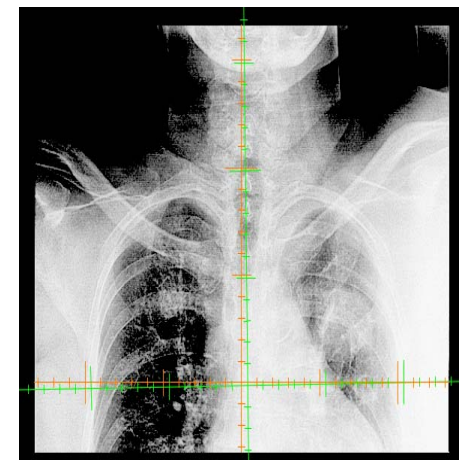
- Goal: straighten and level you in the correct spot for the treatment
- Positioned same as your CT simulation
- We may uncover the treatment area, and then cover you back up before treatment begins.



36



- Goal: used to help fine-tune your positioning
- Once the picture is taken, the radiation beam will come on.
- You will not feel anything when the radiation is on, but you will hear a buzzing noise.
- We may do a scan instead of an x-ray.



37

- Radiation beam will come on for about 3-5 minutes
- Machine will move around you, but will never touch you
- Stay as still as possible during the treatment
- Breathe normally, unless instructed otherwise



38

Safety in the treatment room



- Treatment table can come **4 feet** off the ground
- Safety strap: reminder to **not get off** the table until the treatment is finished and table is lowered

39

Safety in the treatment room

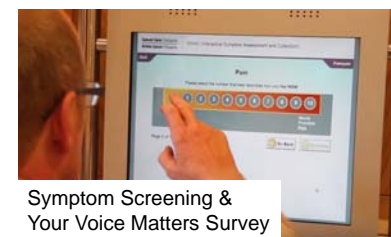


- If you need help at any time, treatment can be paused
- We are watching and listening to you at all times

40

Review clinic

- Once a week on Level 1
- Good time to talk about:
 - Treatment related side effects
 - Questions
 - Prescription renewal
 - Coping/support concerns



Symptom Screening &
Your Voice Matters Survey



Meet with your radiation oncologist
and nurse

41



Radiation side effects

42



Common radiation side effects



Fatigue (tiredness)



Skin changes



Sexual health changes



Emotional health changes

Everyone reacts to radiation differently.

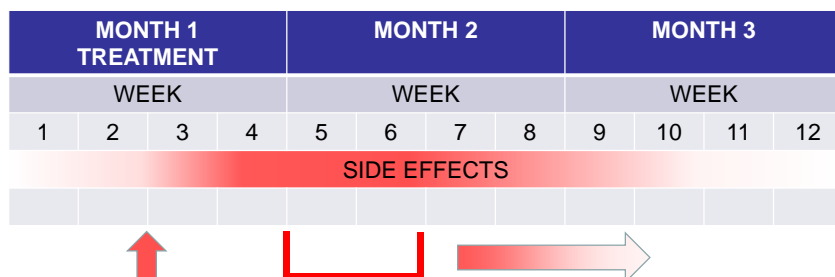
Side effects depend on the area of your body being treated and the amount of radiation given.

You may have other side effects from your treatment. Ask us for more information.

43

When do side effects happen?

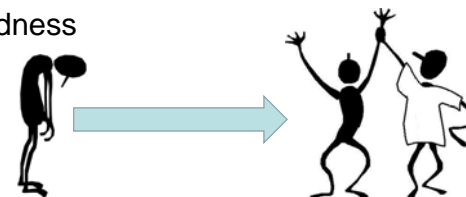
- Usually begin about half-way into treatment
- Continue for 1-2 weeks after treatment is complete, as the radiation is still working inside your body
- Slowly disappear several weeks after treatment



44

Fatigue (tiredness)

- General feeling of tiredness
- Very common



- Things to try:



Light exercise (e.g. walking)



Take small breaks throughout the day



Eat a well-balanced diet

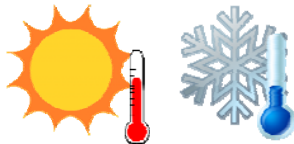


Drink lots of fluids

45

Skin changes

- Examples of skin changes in the area being treated:
 - Dry and itchy skin
 - Tenderness
 - Flaky and peeling skin
 - Changes in the colour of the skin
- Most of these changes will go away a few weeks after your treatment has ended.
- Skin in the treatment area will always be more sensitive to the sun, heat and cold.

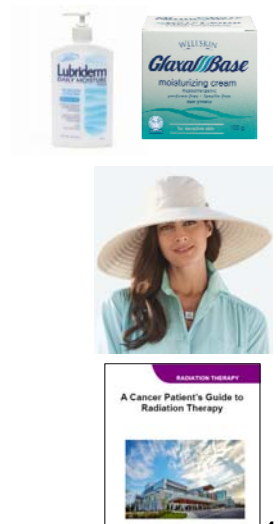


46

Skin care guidelines

DO:

- ✓ Wash using lukewarm water and a gentle, unscented soap.
- ✓ Gently pat dry the area after washing
- ✓ Moisturize with Glaxal Base® or Lubriderm® cream (without lanolin).
- ✓ Use deodorant only on unbroken skin and outside of the treatment area if your skin is not irritated.
- ✓ Cover up in the sun
- ✓ Refer to *A Cancer Patient's Guide to Radiation Therapy* for more tips



47

Skin care guidelines

DO NOT:

- ✗ Rub or scrub the area
- ✗ Use other lotions or creams in the treatment area
- ✗ Use swimming pools, saunas, chlorinated pools, or lakes if your skin has open areas or sores
- ✗ Expose the treatment area to the sun while on treatment and for 2-4 weeks after treatment.
- ✗ Use sunscreen in the treatment area until the skin is completely healed



48

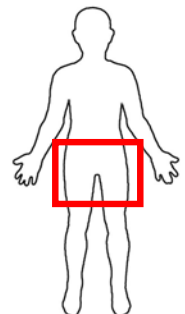
Let's talk about sex...

- It's **okay** to have sex while on radiation
- Your partner will **not** "catch" the cancer
- Your partner will **not** get radiation or be radioactive



Practice safe sex: avoid pregnancy

Patients receiving radiation to their pelvic area:
Ask us about sexual health and fertility changes that may affect you.



49

We're here to help!



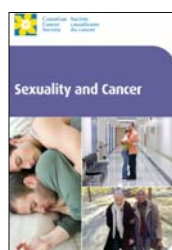
SHIC Clinic

Private, confidential and professional support.
Book an appointment:
705-728-9090 x43520



Group classes

Call 705-728-9090
x43520 for
upcoming
sessions/register



Books in waiting
areas



50

Emotional health: it's important too!



It's normal to feel

anger anxiety sadness
loneliness fear helplessness

We're here to help!



Call 705-728-9090 x 43520
for an appointment

Try:

- Writing it down
- Talk to someone
- Take time for yourself
- Eat and sleep well

51

Your supportive care team



We are here for you!

Call 705-728-9090 x 43520 to meet with us.

See flyer in your new patient package for more details,
or visit www.rvh.on.ca

52

Commonly asked questions

Can I smoke?

- Oxygen + radiation = make the treatments more effective
- Smoking ↓ lowers the oxygen in your body
- ↓ Oxygen + radiation = treatments ↓ less effective
- If you choose to smoke, please do not smoke at least 2 hours before and after your treatment.



53

Commonly asked questions

Are there any parking discounts?

- Daily Max \$15 10-visit pass \$75 **Monthly pass \$90**
- Buy the passes at:



pay stations
(near the entrance to RVH)



parking office
(next to the exit of the Visitor's Parking lot)