

Preparing Your Bowels and Bladder for CT Simulation and Treatments – Stereotactic Prostate - Calgary

What is a CT simulation appointment?

This is a CT scan (image) of your pelvis that is used to plan your radiation treatment. We will call you to set a time and date for your appointment.

What do I have to do?

You need to have an empty bowel and a comfortably full bladder for your CT Simulation. You also need this for **all** of your radiation treatments.

Why do I need to prepare?

Having a comfortably full bladder helps move your small bowel (intestines) away from the treatment area. This will help lower your risk of side effects from the treatment like diarrhea.

Having a Fleet™ enema helps keep your rectum the same size and in the same place for treatment. It also helps reduce gas in your rectum. If your rectum is full, or gassy, you will need to have a bowel movement before your CT simulation or radiation treatments. This could mean you may need to stay longer for your appointment.

What can I do to help have an empty bowel and a full bladder?

The best thing you can do is to keep yourself hydrated. Drinking sips of water throughout the day will help. Start now and continue to sip water regularly daily until you have finished all of your radiation treatments.

You will also need to have regular (daily) bowel movements. This will help you to get ready for the CT simulation, and all of your radiation treatments. It will also help to make sure that you complete your appointments in the quickest amount of time.

Follow the instructions in the “**How do I prepare for my appointments?**” section on the back of this page.

The day of your simulation appointment:

Go to the Radiation Therapy reception desk at your appointment time. The receptionist will show you to the CT Simulator area. The CT Simulator staff will speak with you about your bowel and bladder preparation. Your preparation can affect the number of scans you need.

After your appointment:

A booking clerk will call you with the date and time of your first radiation treatment appointment.

How do I prepare for my appointments?

1. **As soon as possible:** Go to your local pharmacy and buy 6 Fleet™ (sodium phosphate) enemas. You do not need a prescription. Read the instructions carefully. Your pharmacist can answer any questions. You will use 1 enema the day of each of your appointments.
2. The day of your CT simulation appointment or treatment day, eat meals as usual.
3. **2 hours before** your simulation appointment and radiation appointments:
 - Use the Fleet™ enema and follow the instructions on the packaging, with help if needed.
 - Empty your bladder.

Think about how long it takes you to get to your appointment:

Remember that the Fleet™ enema may take up to 1 hour to work. Use the enema at least 1 hour before you need to leave for your appointment. This means you may have to take the enema sooner than 2 hours before your appointment. This is okay, but you need to follow this same timing for each appointment.

For example, if you use the enema 3 hours before your appointment, then use an enema 3 hours before every appointment.

If you're not sure when to take the enema, talk to your healthcare provider.

4. **1 hour** before your appointment, drink **2 cups (500ml) of water** to help re-fill your bladder.
 - Do not use the bathroom to empty your bladder until after your appointment, unless it becomes too hard to hold.

At the end of this preparation your bowel should be empty and you should have a “comfortably” full bladder. Drink more water as needed to feel comfortably full.

Before your CT simulation appointments and throughout treatment:

- Drink sips of water throughout the day to keep hydrated.
- Avoid foods that can cause gas (like cabbage and beans).
- Read the **Managing Gas and Bloating with Nutrition During Radiation Treatment** teaching sheet for more information.