

PROSTATE BRACHYTHERAPY

1. This procedure involves the placement of small radioactive seeds into the prostate under anesthesia. The seeds are placed through the perineum (the skin between the bottom of the scrotal sac and the anus) – it is very common to be swollen and bruised in this area for several weeks.

2. Some patient will be sent home with a temporary urinary catheter in place. Common side effects include:

- Feeling of urinary urgency and incomplete emptying.
- Blood in the bag – blood in the bag is only a problem if the urine flow has stopped due to the thickness of the urine or blood clots passing. If you have been shown how to irrigate the catheter, this should be done if the catheter stops flowing. If you have not, you will need to contact the office or go to the emergency room to have it unclogged.
- Urine leaking around catheter – this is ok as long as urine is also going into the bag. It is caused by spasms of the bladder due to the catheter and is not dangerous. There are some medications that can be given to reduce this, but it is possible that it could persist to some degree despite medications.
- Swelling around the penis and scrotum is not uncommon with a catheter in place and will resolve once the catheter is removed.
- It is ok to shower with a catheter in place.

3. Once the catheter is removed (or if no catheter was placed), the prostate will be irritated by the radiation discharging for several weeks. This may manifest as:

- Blood in the urine –this is only a problem if it is thick like tomato juice or clogging up the flow altogether with blood clots. This can last one and off for several weeks. Flow may not improve for several weeks after the procedure. As long as you are voiding, it is ok to have a slow or restricted flow.
- Urinary urgency – a lot of patients describe a “quick trigger” to urinate after a prostate procedure – this can last several weeks (up to 6 weeks) after the procedure.
- Try to avoid constipation that requires a lot of straining after the procedure as this will increase urinary urgency and bleeding symptoms.
- Avoid sex for 21 days following catheter removal.
- Make sure to ask your doctor when it is ok to restart any blood thinning medications such as aspirin, ibuprofen, advil, motrin, aleve, naprosyn, etc. after the procedure.
- Make sure to stay on any chronic prostate or bladder medications that you have already been on after the procedure until discussed with your doctor.

4. Warning signs

- Fever >101.5F
- Shaking chills
- Inability to void – this will require catheter placement either in the office (during regular office hours) or in the emergency room.