Gynecological High Dose Rate (HDR) Brachytherapy for Vaginal Cylinders
Patient Education

Your doctor has ordered a high dose rate brachytherapy procedure as part of your radiation treatment. You will be scheduled for 3 to 6 HDR treatments occurring weekly.

Pre-Treatment

- You may have a light breakfast and your regular medication the day of your procedure.

Upon arrival to the Radiation Therapy

- You will change into a gown from the waist down; clothes will be stored in a locker.
- Your family/friends can wait in the waiting room located in the Radiation Therapy department. This is where the doctor will look for them post procedure.
- If they choose to leave, they will need to provide staff with a phone number to reach them to pick you up post procedure as you may not drive due to the sedation given.

The Procedure:

- A nurse will insert a urinary catheter.
- You will be pre-medicated with a mild sedative and pain medication.
- The vaginal cylinder will be inserted; you may experience some pressure and mild discomfort while it is in place.
- A CT scan will be taken to confirm correct placement and will also be used to generate your treatment plan, which takes about 45 to 60 minutes; once completed, you are now ready for treatment. You will not feel the treatment, but you will hear a clicking and humming from the machine. The approximate time of the treatment takes about 10 to 15 minutes. It is extremely important for you to lie very still to avoid dislodging the applicator. When the treatment is completed the radioactive source returns to the brachytherapy machine, therefore you are NOT radioactive.

Following the Procedure:

- The physician will remove the cylinder from the vagina.
- The urinary catheter will be removed by the nurse.
- You will then be allowed to get dressed and prepare to go home with a driver.
- You will be given written discharge instructions which will include the date of the next planned HDR.
- For any questions/concerns, please call the nurses' station at (650) 723-5159.