Gynecological High Dose Rate (HDR) Brachytherapy for Interstitial Brachytherapy
Patient Education for

Interstitial catheters may be recommended for your treatment plan. Interstitial catheters are hollow narrow tubes that hold radiation and temporarily stay in the tumor during an inpatient hospital stay, which is usually 4 to 5 days.

Before the interstitial procedure: Two days prior to the procedure you will be allowed only liquids. One day prior to the procedure you will be allowed only clear liquids (liquids you can see through such as water, Gatorade, tea, broth, coffee without cream, Jell-O etc.) and after midnight you will not be allowed to take food or drink. However, the morning of your procedure you may take you medications with a sip of water. You will also need to do a bowel prep which includes one Fleet enema the night before the procedure.

Please advise the medical staff of any blood thinners you are on as they may need to be stopped prior to the procedure. This may include but not limited to sspirin, Coumadin, and Plavix.

On the day of the procedure, you should proceed to the third floor, of the Ambulatory Care Center (ASC) located in the Advanced Cancer Center at 875 Blake Wilbur Road. This is where you will meet with the anesthesiologist and have the necessary pre-op work done. You will then be brought into the procedure room and placed under anesthesia. A Foley catheter is first placed into the bladder and then the interstitial applicator. After insertion of the applicator, you will be scanned on a CT simulator in the Radiation Therapy department, a treatment plan is generated, and then treatment is administered in the brachytherapy suite for HDR treatments. You will then be taken to your assigned inpatient room.

During your hospital stay, you will be given Imodium and will be on a low fiber diet to rest the bowel. You will have a Foley catheter in the bladder until discharge. You may have an epidural catheter or intravenous pain medication by pump for the management of any pain that you may have during your stay. This will be assessed and monitored by the anesthesiologist involved in your care. You will be on bed rest until the implant is removed. While on bed rest you will have compression boots on both legs or receive medication to prevent a blood clot from forming. Your treatments will be twice a day, 6 hours apart in the Radiation Therapy department.