Gynecological High Dose Rate (HDR) Brachytherapy for Tandem and Ovoids
Patient Education

Your doctor has ordered a high dose rate brachytherapy procedure as part of your radiation treatment. You will be scheduled for five HDR treatments occurring weekly during your external beam radiation.

Before the Procedure:

- Pre-procedure instructions include nothing to eat or drink after midnight except for medications with a sip of water.

Upon arrival to the Radiation Therapy department:

- You will go to dressing room to change into a gown, a locker with a key is provided.
- An IV will be started and IV (intravenous) fluids will be started as ordered.
- Pre-medications will be given.
- A Foley catheter will be inserted.
- If your family members choose to leave, please ask them to provide a phone number so that staff can call them post procedure as you will not be able to drive.

The Procedure:

- The nurse will administer pain IV medications to keep you relaxed and comfortable.
- The applicator is then inserted; you may experience some pressure and mild discomfort while it is in place.
- You will be monitored closely by the RN during the procedure.
- 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 complete the radioactive source returns to the brachytherapy machine, therefore you are not radioactive.

Following the Procedure:

- The physician will remove the applicator from the vagina.
- The urinary catheter and IV will then 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 nurse's station at (650) 723-5159.