

This instruction is intended for our patients who are in a care relationship.

**Satakunta Hospital District | Wellbeing Services County of Ostrobothnia | Hospital District of Southwest Finland**

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## **Side effects of radiation therapy to the lung**

Radiation therapy may have side effects, but they are usually temporary and rarely severe. Side effects may continue even after radiation therapy has ended. Follow these instructions as long as the side effects from radiation therapy continue.

Side effects depend on the individual and they depend on the dose and the size of the treated area.

### **Common side effects**

#### **Irritation to the esophagus and heartburn**

You can ease irritation and heartburn by

- eating calmly and small meals often
- eating lukewarm food
- avoiding hard and coarse foods
- avoiding greasy and fried foods
- taking regularly heartburn medicine that your doctor may have prescribed

#### **Cough**

You can treat coughing by taking cough medicine prescribed by your doctor.

#### **Mucus**

During and after radiation therapy secretion of mucus may increase. You can ease it by drinking plenty of fluid.

#### **Fatigue**

Worrying about the future and daily treatments can cause fatigue. Side effects can also lower your abilities.

#### **Exercise**

Do light exercises e.g. outdoor activities, but make sure you get enough rest.

#### **Sauna**

You can go to the sauna but avoid high temperatures because it irritates airways and skin.

## Quit smoking

Quitting smoking is an important part of cancer treatments. Smoking may reduce effectiveness of radiation therapy and prolong side effects. Smoking also increases the risk of a new cancer. You can get help to quit smoking from doctor and nurses.

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