QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR RADIOLOGIST

ONCOLOGIST

***Note: None of this information provided on this sheet constitutes medical or legal advice. Always consult with your medical care team. This compilation of questions is not comprehensive and is only meant for educational purposes. The below questions have been compiled from online resources such as cancer.net, breastcancer.org, and from those diagnosed with breast cancer in our survivingbreastcancer.org community. If you would like to add to this list, please contact info@survivingbreastcancer.org.

Understanding The Goal Of Treatment:

- What is the goal of this treatment? Is it to eliminate the cancer? Is it to reduce pain?
- What are the chances that this treatment will prevent the cancer from coming back or spreading?
- How often will I receive radiation therapy?
- Are there alternatives to the recommended treatment?
- How much time will each treatment take?
- How will we measure the effectiveness of treatment?

Types and Location of Radiation:

- What type of radiation treatment will I be receiving?
- What areas will receive radiation? (Whole breast, chest wall, lymph nodes?)
- What determines how many weeks of radiation I will have. I’ve heard some people have 5 to 6 weeks and others only have 3 weeks?
- Will I need a radiation boost? If so, what does that mean?

Prior to your first radiation session:
• Are there special services for patients receiving radiation therapy, such as certain parking spaces or parking rates?

• Can I bring someone with me to treatment? (This may depend on rules and regulations implemented due to COVID-19)

• How will this treatment affect my daily life? Will I be able to work, exercise, and perform my usual activities?

• If I need to alter my day to day activities how long will it be? A week? A month? A year?

• Will each treatment be the same? Does the radiation dose or area treated change throughout the period of treatment?

• What can I do to get ready for this treatment? Are there recommendations on what clothes to wear or leave behind? Should I put on deodorant?

• Will you describe what I will experience when I receive radiation therapy? Will it hurt or cause me discomfort during the treatment?

**Radiation and Other Treatments?**

• If I decide to have reconstructive surgery, how would that affect my treatment plan?

• Am I allowed to have radiation treatment concurrently with chemo or immuno-therapies?

• Am I allowed to have radiation treatment concurrently with hormonal therapies like tamoxifen or an aromatase inhibitor?

**Side Effects:**

• What are the potential side effects of this treatment? How can I ease side effects?

• Who should I contact about any side effects I experience? And how soon?
How will my skin be affected during radiation therapy? What skin products can I use each day?

Do I need to be concerned about sun exposure?

Should I avoid certain foods, vitamins, or supplements?

Should I avoid using deodorant or antiperspirant during treatment?

What are the possible long-term effects of this treatment?

Will radiation put me at risk for developing lymphedema?

What are the risks of radiation? Will it affect my lungs or my heart?

After Radiation Treatment Ends:

When are follow-up visits scheduled? Who is responsible for follow-up after radiation therapy?

Who schedules my follow up mammograms?

If the cancer comes back, can I get radiation therapy again?

Will there be changes to my breast after radiation ends? If so, what should I expect?