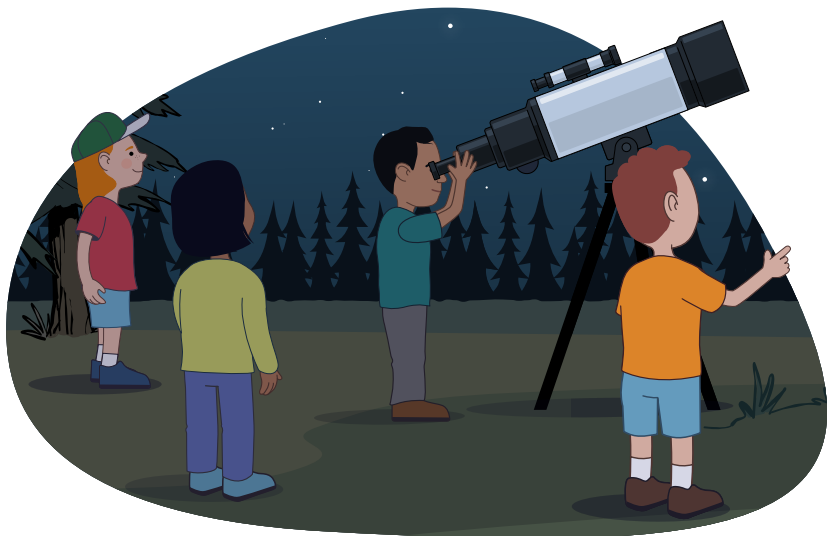


# Radiation Therapy

## Prep Book



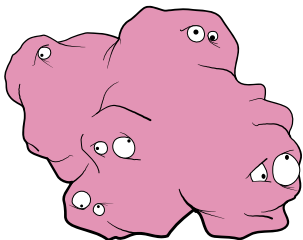
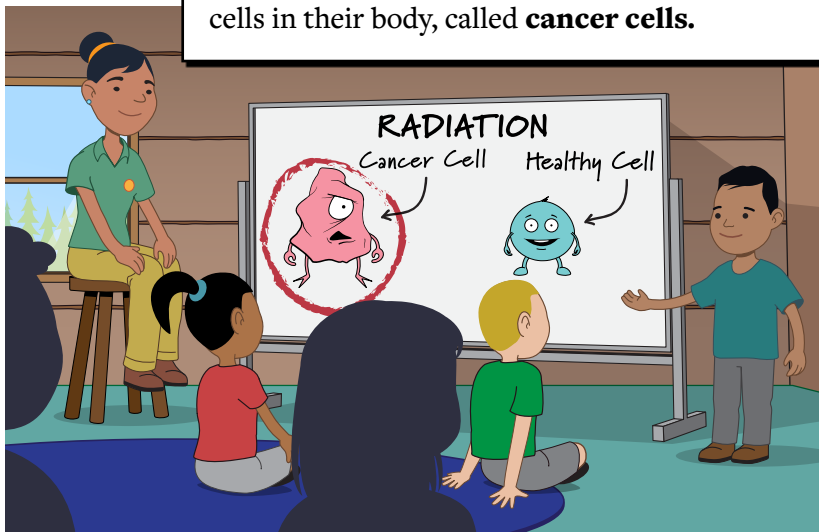
by **UC Davis Child Life**



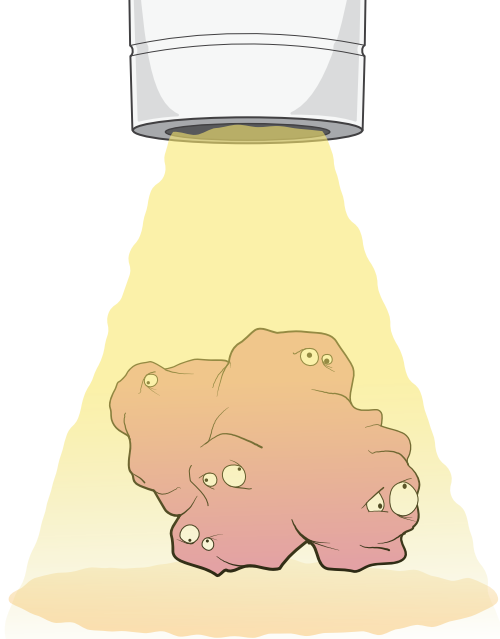
I'm at camp doing one of my favorite activities - stargazing with my friends. Thinking about stargazing helped me when I had radiation therapy as part of my cancer treatment.

Let's go to the learning lab where I can share more!

When someone has cancer, they have unhealthy cells in their body, called **cancer cells**.

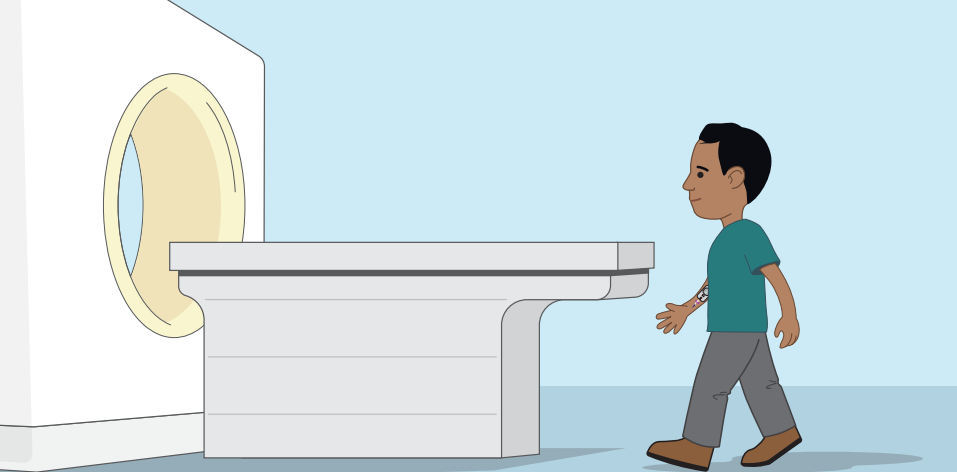


When cancer cells form together, this is called a **tumor**.



**Radiation** can shrink tumors by aiming high-powered energy beams on areas of the body with cancer. You can't see the energy beams or feel them.

There are a few steps to prepare for radiation.



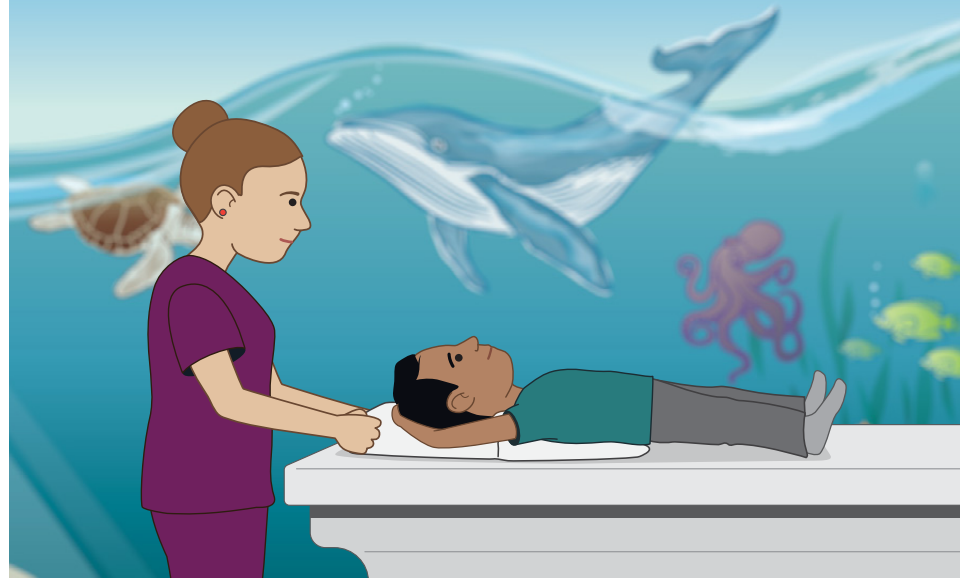
# CT SIMULATION

The first is to do a **CT simulation** where tools are made and pictures are taken to plan your radiation treatment.

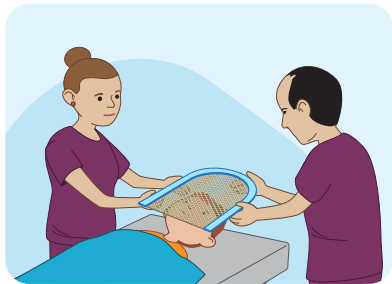
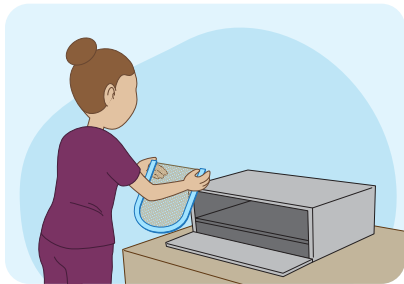
Some people may be given **contrast** or “picture fluid” during their CT scan. This helps the team see exactly where the tumor is. Contrast is usually given through an **IV** or **central line**.

Before your CT scan, you can choose a color for the room or a video to show on the wall.

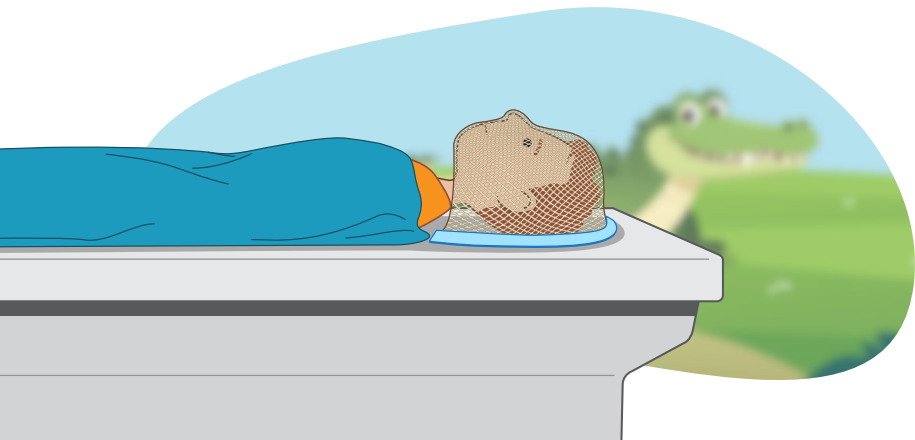




You will then lay on the CT table where the radiation therapist will make the radiation tools needed for your body. These make staying still during treatment easier and helps the radiation go to the areas it needs to treat. Your family will be in the room with you at this time.



If radiation is for the head area, a mask will be made. The mask is warm and then cools down as it forms on the face. You can breathe and see through the little holes.

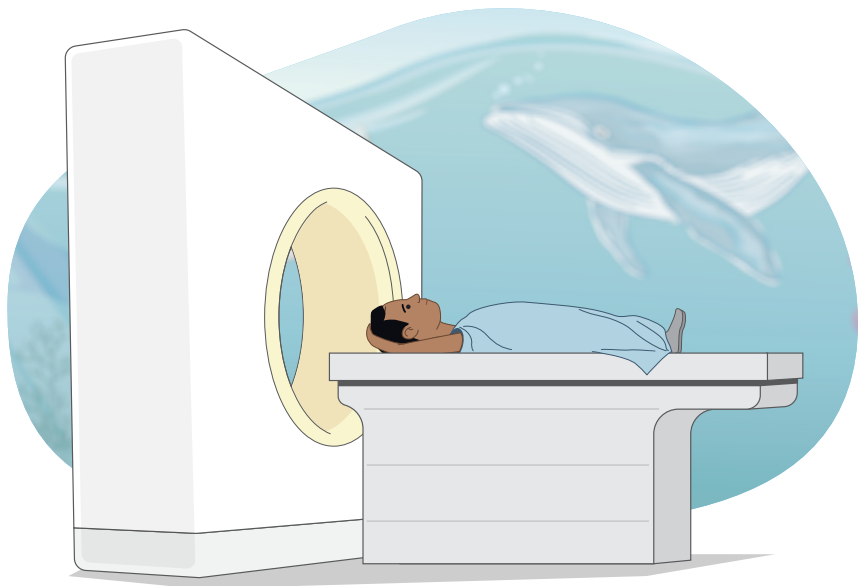




Sometimes, a bean bag mold will be made, or other tools will be part of the plan.

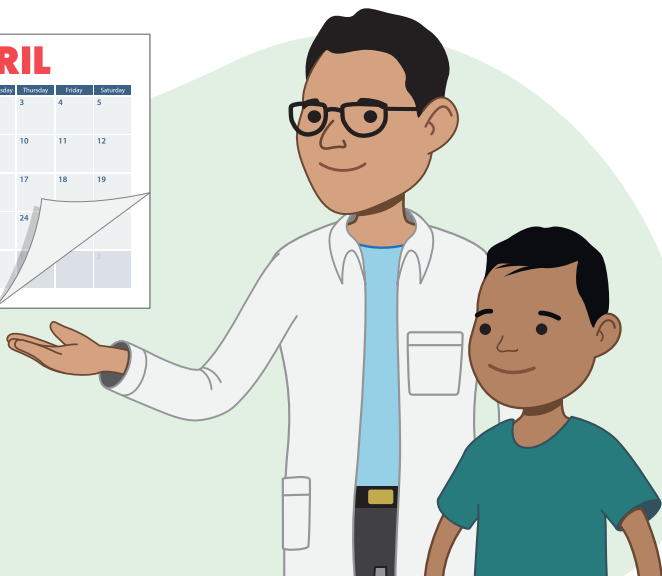


Once all the tools are made, your family and care team will exit the room while CT pictures are taken. They can talk to you and see you through the window. When the scan is over, your family and care team will come back in the CT room.



Before leaving the appointment, the team will give you a check-in card and a list of your radiation treatment days and times. All plans are different and made special for each person.

APRIL						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24		
27	28	29	30			



# RADIATION

When you arrive for your first day, a radiation therapist will take you into the radiation room. You can choose the color of the room and what music you want to listen to.

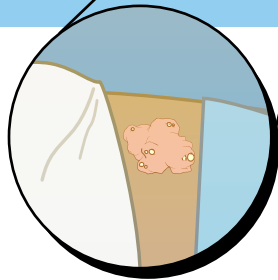
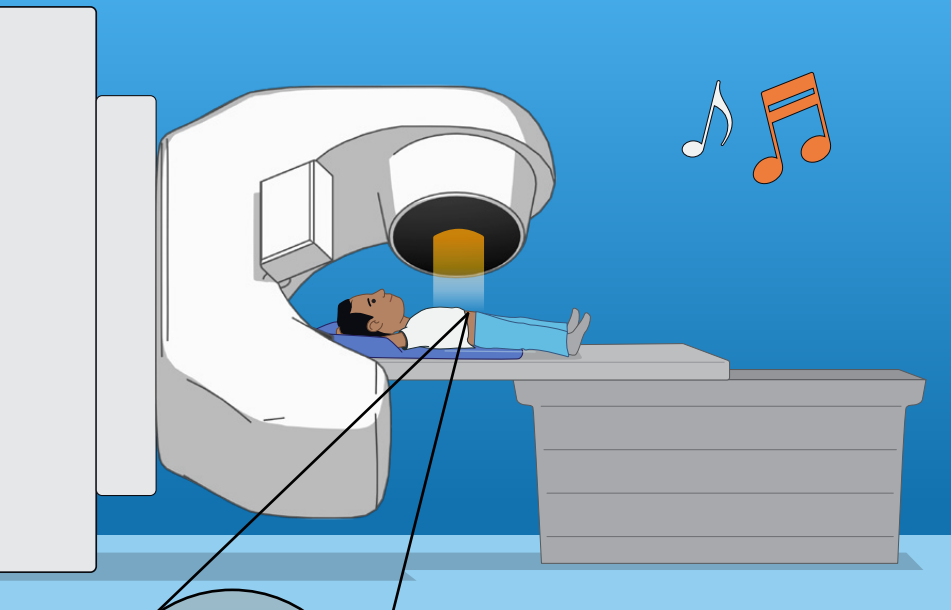


The radiation therapists will help you onto the table and make sure your body is in perfect position using the tools that were made just for you.





Everyone will leave the room when the radiation begins, but they are nearby and can still hear and see you on a screen.



The radiation machine moves around your body, but it does not touch you, and you will not feel anything during your treatment.

I stayed calm listening  
to my favorite music and  
imagining I was back at  
camp, stargazing.





Radiation can be a lot of hard work on the body. There were times when I felt tired and had **nausea**. Some days I didn't want to eat as much. At my weekly clinic appointment, I learned that these things usually go away after treatment.

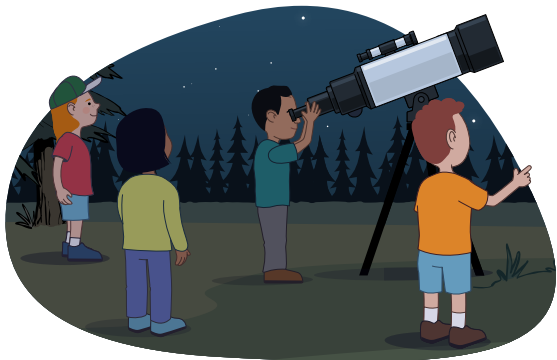
On days I was feeling up to it, I was still able to play and have fun.



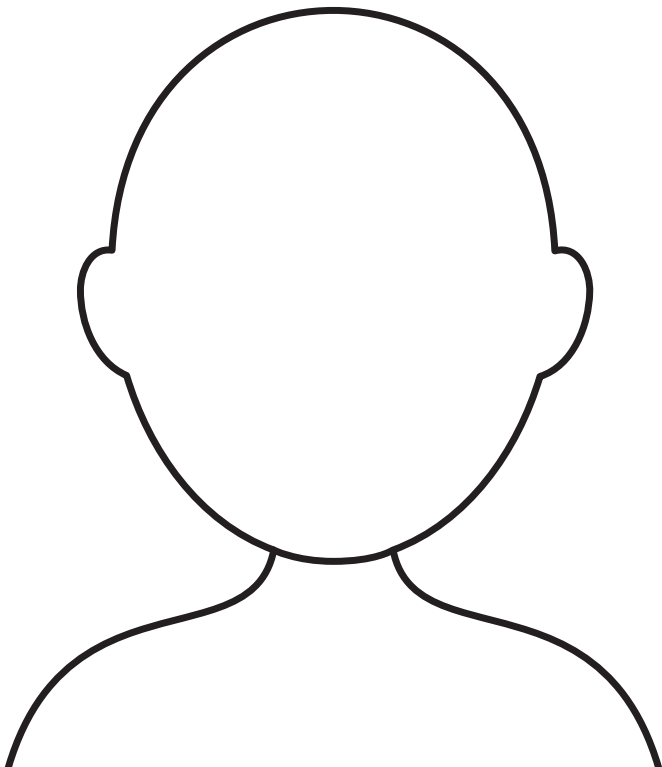


After I completed radiation, I rang the end of radiation treatment bell to celebrate! My care team was right there with me.

I hope you learned a lot about radiation today. Now...back to stargazing!



If you could design a radiation mask, what would yours look like?



Let's start making  
a coping plan:



What is your favorite color? \_\_\_\_\_

What songs or artists would you like to listen to?

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# Glossary

**Cancer Cells:** The body is made up of many tiny cells and is always growing new healthy cells. Cancer cells are unhealthy or abnormal and can build in the body.

**Tumor:** Abnormal cells that form together to create a lump. Sometimes tumors affect how the body works. Not all tumors are cancer.

**Radiation:** Uses a large machine to aim energy beams that destroy tumor or cancer cells.

**CT Simulation:** A computed tomography scan (CT scan), also called computed axial tomography scan (CAT scan), which takes pictures to see certain parts of the inside of the body. A CT scan used to plan or “map out” radiation treatment.

# Glossary

**IV:** An intravenous line (IV) is a soft, flexible tube placed inside a vein, usually in the hand or arm. Health care providers use IV lines to give a person medicine or fluids.

**Central Line:** A long, flexible tube that is like an intravenous (IV) line, but it stays in place longer. The tube is inside the body and reaches a large vein near the heart.

**Nausea:** When the body feels like it's going to throw up or feel sick.

# Questions?

As you learn about radiation therapy, you may have some thoughts or questions. Feel free to write them here!

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Scan QR code to watch a  
short video about radiation.