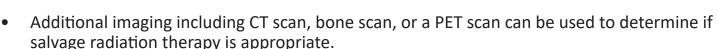


## What is Salvage Radiation Therapy?

**Salvage radiation therapy** is a type of radiation therapy given to men who had their prostate removed but their prostate-specific antigen (PSA) levels increase during follow-up.

# Who Should Get Salvage Radiation Therapy?

 Men with a PSA level ≥0.2ng/mL after undergoing prostate removal surgery, called biochemical recurrence.



### What is the Significance of Biochemical Recurrence?

- Biochemical recurrence is an early finding of prostate cancer relapse.
- Biochemical recurrence can be treated with salvage radiation therapy, hormone therapy, combination therapy, or close observation.

| Potential Benefits   | Potential Side Effects   |
|--|--|
| <ul> <li>Help cure prostate cancer in men with<br/>biochemical recurrence</li> </ul> | <ul> <li>Worsening of urinary control, sexual<br/>function, or your bowel habits</li> </ul>  |
| <ul> <li>Reduce the risk of needing hormone<br/>therapy in the future</li> </ul>     | <ul> <li>Diarrhea, bowel irritation, blood in your<br/>stool, blood in your urine, urinary urgency,<br/>urinary frequency, painful urination, urinary<br/>incontinence, urethral narrowing/scar<br/>tissue, or worsening of erections</li> </ul> |
| <ul> <li>Prevent the development of metastasis<br/>(cancer spreading)</li> </ul>     |  |

- Side effects may be experienced during the time of treatment, several years later, or not at all
- Most side effects are short term, mild to moderate, and are treatable
- Some side effects may be more severe and difficult to manage. Rarely additional procedures or surgeries may be needed

### When is Salvage Radiation Therapy Given?

- Recent data suggests that giving radiation at a level of ≥0.2ng/mL (ideally before 1.0 ng/mL) is as effective as giving radiation therapy while the PSA is still undetectable.
- A PSA of ≥0.2ng/mL is typically when doctors and patients consider giving salvage radiation therapy.
- The exact value that is best for you may vary and you should discuss this further with your urologist or radiation oncologist.





# How is Salvage Radiation Therapy Given?

- Radiation therapy is delivered by a radiation oncologist who works closely with your urologic surgeon.
- Salvage radiation therapy is a type of external beam radiation therapy.
- Typically administered to the prostate bed and sometimes the surrounding lymph node tissue.
- Most men receive a course of radiation, 5 days per week, over a 4-8 week period.
- Sometimes a course of hormone therapy or androgen deprivation therapy will be given with the radiation.
- You should discuss this further with your radiation oncologist if they believe you should receive hormone therapy with your salvage radiation.



# What are the Alternatives to Salvage Radiation Therapy?

- Hormone therapy.
  - Side effects: fatigue, hot flashes, worsening of sexual function, loss of libido, bone loss, weight gain, muscle loss/weakness and confusion or minor issues with cognitive function.
- Close observation. Some may wait and see if prostate cancer spreads to their lymph nodes, bones, or other organs before starting hormone therapy or other chemotherapy-like medications. This will be a shared decision between you and your urologist or radiation oncologist.



This document is designed for adult patient education. For additional information regarding this informational pamphlet, please contact us at:

> MUSIC Coordinating Center 2800 Plymouth Rd. Building 16 Ann Arbor, MI 48109

> > (855) 456 - 2035

www.musicurology.com

Copyright 2022. For questions about the Michigan Urological Surgery Improvement Collaborative, please contact us at musicurology@umich.edu

MUSIC is sponsored by:



A nonprofit corporation and independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association