High Dose Rate (HDR) Brachytherapy With Anesthesia

High dose rate (HDR) brachytherapy is a type of radiation treatment. It involves a doctor placing a tiny radioactive seed inside your prostate for a short time to deliver radiation to the area.

Before the Procedure
You will meet with a nurse before the procedure. The nurse will talk with you about your health and go over your current medicines, including their names and doses. The nurse will ask if you have had any trouble with anesthesia before. You will need to have some lab tests and an ECG before treatment.

During the Procedure
On the day of your procedure, you will receive instructions about where to check in. After you check in, you will put on compression leggings for your lower legs. These leggings gently squeeze your legs to help your blood flow during the procedure.

You will receive sedation or anesthesia to help you relax or sleep during the procedure. We will place your legs in leg rests. A doctor cleans your skin at the treatment site with special soap and inserts a small tube into your bladder to collect urine.

The doctor places thin tubes (catheters) into your prostate. These tubes are used to deliver treatment directly to the area. Then, the doctor also places tiny marking seeds in your prostate. These seeds are not radioactive. They help guide the doctor during your CT scan.

The doctor uses a CT scan to check catheter placement by taking images. After the CT, the doctor uses computer software to plan your treatment.

They use a tiny radioactive seed (the size of a pencil lead) to deliver radiation. The seed attaches to a wire and stays in a box until it is time for your treatment.

When treatment starts, the radioactive seed moves through the catheters into your prostate. The seed stays there for the time needed to give you radiation (about 15 to 30 minutes).

After you finish getting radiation, the care team removes the radioactive seed and the tubes, then gently lower your legs back onto the table. The marking seeds will stay in your body after the procedure. These are safe. They will not trigger metal detectors and will not affect MRI scans in the future. These seeds can be seen in future x-rays taken of your pelvis.

Most people recover in 2 to 3 hours. We will move you to the recovery room to watch you for about an hour. When you wake up more, they will move you to the discharge room and you may have something to drink. You might remember some things about your procedure. Your family or friends can come in the room at this time. The doctor will talk with you and answer your questions before you leave.

Driving
Do not drive for 24 hours after your procedure. Arrange for someone to drive you home and stay with you for the next 24 hours.

Work
You may return to most types of work. We can provide work notes if needed.

Activity Restrictions

- **No** drinking alcohol for 24 hours.
- **Do not** use any dangerous equipment or make major decisions for 24 hours.
- **Avoid** hot tubs, pools, or outdoor water sources for about 1 week. This is to prevent infections. Showers and sponge bathing are ok.
- **Avoid** activities like biking, horseback riding, motorcycling, etc. for 2 weeks.
- **No** sex for at least 4 weeks. You will notice blood or dried blood in the semen. This is normal and will clear up over time.

Pain

You may have mild pain. Listen to your body. If something causes you pain, don't do it. You need to let this area heal. You may use Tylenol® (acetaminophen) or ibuprofen and/or sit on a pillow if you have pain. If your pain does not improve, please call.

Medicine

We will prescribe an antibiotic that you will need to take for a few days. Take the medicine the evening you go home.

Follow-up Visit

You will have a follow-up visit in 3 months. We will do lab work to check for any prostate health issues at that time.

Who to Call

If you have any questions or concerns, please call us at (**608) 915-1201.**

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 3/2026 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HFFY# 8076.