

How to Reduce Gas in your Large Bowel during Prostate Radiation Therapy

Gas in the large bowel comes from two sources: swallowed air and from fermentation by gut bacteria. Following these guidelines will help reduce gas in your large bowel during your CT simulation and radiation treatments.

Begin following these guidelines 5 to 7 days before your CT simulation (marking) appointment and continue to follow these guidelines until you have finished your radiation treatments.

If you have not had a bowel movement the day before your CT simulation (marking) appointment, take two Senokot S™ tablets (with warm milk, if milk is tolerated) after your evening meal.

Decrease swallowed air

Swallowed air makes up 90% of the gas in our digestive tract or gut. Some of this air leaves the stomach by burping or belching. The rest passes through our digestive tract and is released through the rectum (passing gas or flatulence).

To swallow less air:

- Eat food slowly and try to relax while eating.
- Avoid gulping fluids. Drink fluids from a glass.
- Drink lukewarm fluids instead of hot. Air is swallowed when hot drinks are sipped.
- Chew food well and with your mouth closed.
- Avoid drinking straws or drinking from bottles or cans.
- Avoid carbonated drinks like pop, beer and carbonated water.

Reduce gas made by gut bacteria

The rest of the gas in our digestive tract comes from bacteria in the large intestine. These naturally occurring bacteria feed on undigested carbohydrates and fiber from the foods we eat.

Try to identify and avoid foods that cause discomfort to your digestive system. Make sure you are having regular bowel movements so that gas does not remain trapped in your bowel.

Regular physical activity and eating at regular intervals can also help.

The following foods may increase gas and should be **limited** during the course of your radiation therapy:

Vegetables	broccoli, cauliflower, brussel sprouts, cabbage, kale, onions, garlic
Fruits	dried fruit (raisins, prunes), naval oranges, unripe bananas
Legumes	dried beans, lentils, split peas, chick peas, chili beans
Sugar alcohols	Sugar-free candies (xylitol, sorbitol, mannitol)