Ask a Radiation Oncologist:
Radiation Therapy for Cervical Cancers

RT Answers Facebook Live Event: January 28, 7:30 pm ET/4:30 pm PT

Jenna Kahn, MD
Oregon Health & Science University
(Moderator)

Ann Klopp, MD, PhD
MD Anderson Cancer Center

Matt Harkenrider, MD
Loyola University Medical Center

Jyoti Mayadev, MD
UC San Diego Health

facebook.com/RTAnswers
Format for Tonight

- Panelists answer prepared questions
- Ask questions in the Facebook chat
- Recording will be available online
Gynecologic cancers include malignancies of the female genital tract involving the vulva, vagina, cervix, uterus, fallopian tubes or ovaries. According to the American Cancer Society, 109,000 women will be diagnosed with some form of gynecologic cancer this year. Cancers of the uterus and cervix are the most common gynecologic cancers treated with radiation and account for 75,050 new cases each year. Widespread screening with the Pap test allows doctors to find pre-cancerous changes in the cervix and vagina early.

**Radiation Therapy for Gynecologic Cancers**
Gynecologic Cancers

Gynecologic cancers include malignancies of the female genital tract involving the vulva, vagina, cervix, uterus, fallopian tubes or ovaries. According to the American Cancer Society, 113,520 women in 2020 will be diagnosed with some form of gynecologic cancer. Cancers of the uterus, cervix and ovary are most common. They account for 101,200 new cases each year. Widespread screening with the Pap test has allowed doctors to find pre-cancerous changes in the cervix and vagina. This has helped catch some invasive cancers early.
Diagnosis of Cervical Cancer
Diagnosis of Cervical Cancer

What is Cervical Cancer?
Cervical Cancer Diagnosis

What is, and causes, HPV?

How do I get HPV?

What if I had the HPV vaccine?

Should I get the HPV vaccine?
Cervical Cancer Diagnosis

Is there any way to prevent cervical cancer?

How does screening work?
If I have an abnormal Pap test, what are the next steps?
Audience Questions & Additional Discussion
Curative Treatment of Cervical Cancer
Curative Treatment

Which doctors are involved with patients with Cervical Cancer?

Which types of treatments does each offer?
Curative Treatment

What are the different types of surgical procedures that may be offered?

Is laparoscopic surgery any better than standard surgical procedures for cervical cancer?
Curative Treatment

What if I want to preserve fertility?
Curative Treatment

Why might a patient not want surgery to treat their cervical cancer? What are the risks?

Why are some patients not candidates for surgery?
Curative Treatment

How does radiation therapy work?
Curative Treatment

What are some of the different types of radiation therapy that may be offered?
Curative Treatment

What is brachytherapy and why is it important for cervical cancer?
Curative Treatment

What are types of side effects that are common with radiation therapy?
Curative Treatment

How are chemotherapy, immunotherapy, and targeted therapy used alongside radiation therapy to help cure patients?
Other Topics
Future Directions

What new advances will help enable radiation therapy to better cure cervical cancer in the future?
Should I delay treatment of cervical cancer due to concern of COVID-19 infection?
Cancer patients may have an increased risk of contracting COVID-19 and more severe disease if infected. According to the CDC, “Adults of any age with certain underlying medical conditions are at increased risk for severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19. mRNA COVID-19 vaccines may be administered to people with underlying medical conditions provided they have not had a severe or immediate allergic reaction to any of the ingredients in the vaccine.” These guidelines also apply to cancer patients. The mRNA COVID-19 vaccines do not include any virus, and there is no risk of contracting the infection from the vaccine.

Patients who have cancer, as well as those who have received treatment for cancer, may be immune compromised, but these patients may still receive COVID-19 vaccines as long as there is no increased risk of reaction to any of the components of the vaccine. ASTRO encourages cancer patients who are actively receiving treatment such as radiation therapy to consult with their oncologists about the timing for vaccination, injection location, and any unique considerations relevant for their treatments. Individuals with a prior history of cancer who are not in active treatment are encouraged to seek vaccination whenever it is made available to them.