

Side Effects of Radiation to the Eye

After treatment for cancer

This handout lists possible short-term and long-term side effects that patients may have after receiving radiation treatment to the eye.

Short-term

- Irritation to the *conjunctiva* (the thin layer of cells that covers the front of your eye)
- Loss of eyelashes
- Reddening, swelling of the eyelid or skin around the eyes (*periorbital erythema*)
- Eye irritation, with tearing and swelling
- Fatigue (feeling very tired)
- Inflamed *cornea* (surface of the eye), called *keratitis*



Please talk with your care provider if you have questions or concerns about any of these side effects.

Long-term Side Effects

- Blurring in the lens of the eye (*cataracts*), which may need surgery
- Pressure in the eyeball (*glaucoma*)
- Dry eye, which requires regular use of eye drops to protect the cornea

Rare Side Effects

- Disease of the retina (*retinopathy*)
- An open sore on the cornea (*corneal ulceration*)
- Vision loss
- Cancers caused by the radiation (*secondary malignancy*)

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

Weekdays 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., call Radiation Oncology at 206.598.4100.

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206.598.6190 and ask to page the Radiation Oncologist on call.