



Association of Radiation Oncologists of India

SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR RADIATION THERAPY PATIENTS & STAFF AMID CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK IN CONCLUSION

An advisory by the association of radiation oncologists of India (AROI) for radiation therapy patients and staff amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.

Cancer patients are more susceptible to infection because of the following reasons

- Undergoing treatment in form of chemotherapy, radiotherapy, immunotherapy, targeted therapy
- Patients with hematological malignancies
- Transplant patients on immunosuppressive therapy
- Elderly cancer patients with medical comorbidities

In order to contain the spread of novel COVID-19, some precautionary measures are required to be taken

HOW DO YOU SUSPECT A COVID 19 CASE:

A patient with fever & cough and breathing difficulty with

- Contact with suspected & confirmed COVID19 cases in the last few weeks
Traveled to any of the countries where local transmission going on (WHO document)
- Healthcare worker caring for a confirmed COVID19 pts
- Severe pneumonia or ARDS
- A person living in the same household as COVID 19 case or direct contact with COVID 19 case without proper PPE
- Face to face contact with COVID 19 case within 1 meter or closed environments like an airplane or closed room gatherings

DIRECTIVE TO PATIENTS:

- Follow social distancing
- Stay at home as much as possible
- Avoid crowded areas
- Wash your hands frequently and correctly with a soap/ sanitizer
- Consider delaying your palliative radiotherapy if it is only for minor symptom relief and has no impact on outcome or disease control
- Elderly patients, especially with symptoms, are at highest risk and extra precaution should be taken

DIRECTIVES TO HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS:

GENERAL MEASURES:

- Provide a clean and spacious waiting area with adequate distance between Chairs
- Provide mask and hand hygiene aids like sanitizer, hand-wash, gloves at outpatient area
- Protocol for temperature and vitals checking for patients
- Special care to suspected/vulnerable patients by dedicated & trained staff
- Protocol for COVID 19 screening & isolation
- All international travelers should submit a self-declaration form which can be submitted at the counters
- Certain countries are high transmission countries and travelers from those countries are advised to undergo 14 days self-quarantine from the date of arrival
- All such suspected patients should be handled as per institutional policies and guidelines/helplines provided by the government