



A partnership between Allevia Hospitals
and Southern Cross Healthcare



My Treatment Book



auckland
radiation
oncology

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Epsom Auckland 1023

North Shore 6 Antares Place
Rosedale Auckland 0632

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P +64 9 623 6046
E admin@aro.co.nz



Welcome to Auckland Radiation Oncology

ARO General and Specialist Enquiries

P +64 9 623 6046

E admin@aro.co.nz

ARO Nurses

Epsom

E aronurses@aro.co.nz

North Shore

E aronursesns@aro.co.nz

The team at Auckland Radiation Oncology (ARO) know that this is a difficult time for both you and those closest to you; however, you can be confident that your referring specialist has chosen ARO to be part of your care team because we are committed to providing the best possible treatment in a welcoming, calm and comfortable environment.

This booklet belongs to:

Specialist:

Ph:

Other important contacts:

Name:

Ph:

Email:

Name:

Ph:

Email:

Name:

Ph:

Email:

After Hours Support

ARO hours of clinical operation are from 7:30am to 4:00pm Monday to Friday. We are unable to take calls or provide support and care outside of these times.

If you are concerned about your symptoms and need care or assistance outside of these hours, please **visit an after-hours urgent care medical centre or the local Emergency Department**. The nearest urgent care and Emergency Departments are detailed on our website www.aro.co.nz by typing After Hours in the top right search bar.

For critical or life-threatening emergencies **please dial 111**.

If you have questions about this process or would like to know more about what symptoms to expect please discuss with your Radiation Oncologist.



Your treatment book

This booklet contains important information specific to your treatment, so we ask that you take some time to read through this information. It covers what to expect before, during and after radiation therapy treatment. It also includes information about who will be taking care of you, what possible side-effects may occur and how to manage these. Should you have any questions or concerns please contact us on +64 9 623 6046.

It is important you bring this booklet with you during your treatment with Auckland Radiation Oncology (ARO), including appointments with your radiation oncologist, treatment visits and other appointments at ARO. There are note pages at the back of your booklet so you can write special instructions, or raise any questions or concerns you may have during your treatment at ARO.

Getting started

To ensure that you can start your radiation therapy treatment on time, it's important that the you complete the Patient Registration and Patient Health History forms (available online at **www.aro.co.nz** or from your Radiation Oncologist) as soon as possible, as delays in receiving these forms may result in a delay to the start of your treatment. The Patient Registration and Patient Health History forms can be downloaded from the ARO website in Patient Pathway, 1. First Specialist Appointment in resources on the right hand side. **www.aro.co.nz/steps/1**

You may return the forms back to us by:

- Emailing **reception@aro.co.nz**
- Or delivering them to us in person

Once your registration is complete, a member of our team will contact you with the time of your treatment planning (CT scan - sometimes called CT simulation) appointment if applicable to your personal cancer treatment plan. There is further detail about your simulation planning appointment in this folder.

Our commitment to you

- You will be welcomed as an individual, by a team that recognises that you have your own special needs and concerns.
- We will endeavour to provide you with treatment times that fit with your schedule.
- All of your treatments will be delivered in a welcoming, discreet and caring environment.
- Every aspect of your treatment will be given to the highest standard of clinical skill, from a team including experienced radiation oncologists (RO), radiation therapists (RT), nurses and physicists who constantly strive to exceed expectations.
- We have patient care specialists (registered nurses and radiation therapists) on site who will address any concerns you may have about treatment side-effects, and they are available throughout the treatment process.
- Support from dietitians is also available to those patients who require it.
- The emotional and psychological effects of cancer can be overwhelming. Please contact us if you would like support from trained professionals.

ARO Epsom

-  Free parking on site
-  Free Wi-Fi
-  3 treatment rooms (called bunkers)
-  CyberKnife robotic radiation therapy
-  Consulting and examination rooms

Other on site facilities

-  Café
-  Laboratory
-  Pharmacy
-  Allevia Radiology
-  Canopy Cancer Care

ARO North Shore

-  Free parking on-site
-  Free Wi-Fi
-  1 treatment room (called bunkers)
-  Consulting and examination rooms



Usual treatment pathway



STEP 1

First specialist appointment



STEP 2

Orientation



STEP 3

Planning CT simulation



STEP 4

First day of treatment



STEP 5

During treatment



STEP 6

Last week of treatment



STEP 7

Following treatment

STEP 1

First specialist appointment



At the first specialist appointment you will meet with your specialist radiation oncologist to discuss the proposed radiotherapy treatment approach and to ask any questions you may have.

Should you decide to proceed with treatment at ARO it will be important to send us completed Patient Registration and Patient Health History forms (available online at www.aro.co.nz or from your radiation oncologist) as soon as possible to avoid possible delay of treatment.

STEP 2

Orientation



At the orientation appointment a patient care specialist (nurse or radiation therapist) will explain the procedures in more detail and answer any concerns that you might have about ARO or your treatment.

STEP 3

Planning CT Simulation



Before starting treatment, you will attend a Planning CT Simulation appointment to work out the optimal body position for receiving treatment and provide a detailed picture of the area to be treated.

Specific instructions relating to this appointment can be found at the back of the booklet.

During the days following your orientation and Planning CT Simulation appointment our team of experts (physicists, radiation therapist planners and your radiation oncologist) work together to develop the ideal treatment plan for you. This involves a highly sophisticated planning software system and review process to guarantee safe and effective delivery of treatment. Depending on the site and complexity of the treatment, this stage can take up to two weeks and in some cases longer.





STEP 4

First day of treatment



You'll need to arrive 10-15 minutes before your allocated treatment time so that we can greet you and to give you time to get changed for your treatment. Please bring an extra layer of clothing (e.g. cardigan or jacket) just in case you feel cold while you wait in the treatment reception area, or you can ask one of our treatment team for a dressing gown. Our radiation therapist team is made up of staff of different genders. If you have any concerns about privacy, modesty or who is involved in your care, please let us know and we will do our best to accommodate your preferences wherever possible.

If you are driving, parking is free at both ARO Epsom and ARO North Shore. Before you visit for the first time, please refer to pages 12 - 13 in this booklet for important location and parking information at each facility.

The radiation therapy itself is non-invasive and painless, and should take only 10-15 minutes to deliver. Sometimes this can take longer if there is a complex set-up required, such as for patients requiring treatment to the head and neck area. Please allow 30-60 minutes for each scheduled treatment visit.

Your specific treatment type will be explained to you by a radiation therapist (RT) on your first day of treatment.

STEP 5

During treatment



Weekly reviews with your radiation oncologist or one of our patient care specialists will be conducted to monitor any side effects and provide on-going support and advice as required.

Patient Education Session

Early in your treatment, we will arrange for you to meet with our patient education specialist. We will discuss your treatment plan, explain how the radiation is being applied and possible side effects.

Patients have told us these sessions are very valuable and we encourage you to bring a friend or family member along with you. This is an ideal opportunity to ask any questions.

Remember that our team are available at any time to answer questions or concerns that you may have about your treatment or possible side effects, and if required, the patient care specialists on site can usually see you shortly after you finish treatment for the day.

More information and answers to frequently asked questions are available on page 10 or www.aro.co.nz. If you have questions or concerns please phone or email our nurses.

STEP 6

Last week of treatment

An appointment will be scheduled for you to meet with a member of our patient care team to ensure appropriate care is organised after your last treatment visit. This may include regular monitoring of blood results, appointments for dressings and management of side effects.



STEP 7

Following treatment



Usually 2-6 weeks after your last treatment visit you will meet with your radiation oncologist or the doctor that referred you to ARO. Your GP will also be sent a report about your treatment and will continue to provide for your general health needs.

You are welcome to contact our patient care team to ask questions you may have about your treatment or possible side effects up to 2 weeks following your last treatment visit. Please telephone or email our nurses to make an appointment. Should you require support more than 2 weeks after completing your treatment, please contact your Radiation Oncologist's rooms directly rather than ARO. If your Radiation Oncologist consultations were undertaken at the ARO Specialist Centre (Epsom or North Shore), please contact the ARO Specialist Centre via email at **admin@aro.co.nz**.

For all other health concerns, please contact your GP, usual healthcare provider or local emergency facility.



Side Effects

The peak of any side effects experienced may occur around 7 to 14 days after the completion of your radiation therapy. This is due to the cumulative nature of the treatment.

Most side effects only last a few weeks but some of the effects, such as tiredness, may last for a couple of months after the end of your treatment. However, you should gradually start to feel like yourself again.

Skin Care

For two weeks after completing treatment we advise that you continue with any special skin care instructions. Please also:

- Avoid direct sunlight on the treated area.
- Avoid hot pools until any skin reaction has completely healed.

The skin in the treatment area will always be more sensitive to the sun:

- Avoid direct sunlight on the treated area as much as possible, use hats and clothing to cover it.
- **Once skin has healed**, apply sun-block with an SPF of 30 or higher to any **exposed, previously treated skin**, if you are going to be out in the sun.

Diet

If your diet has been modified during your radiation therapy treatment we recommend you gradually return to your normal eating habits after seven days, unless otherwise advised by your doctor.

Long-Term Side Effects

Most people return to “normal” after completion of their treatment, but a few patients experience some long-term side effects. These can develop gradually over several months or years and will be monitored by your specialist team.

Radiation Therapy During Pregnancy

Radiation therapy can harm a developing baby, particularly in the first half of pregnancy. Risks include miscarriage, birth defects, developmental delays, and an increased risk of cancer in your baby.

Pregnancy screening and prevention

Your care team will ask about your pregnancy status. This is routine for all patients who could potentially become pregnant.

It is important to avoid becoming pregnant during your treatment. If you need advice on effective contraception, please speak with your Radiation Oncologist or GP.

If you are unsure whether you may be pregnant, please take a pregnancy test and inform your ARO care team of the result.

You will also see signage in treatment and changing areas highlighting the risks of becoming pregnant.

If you are pregnant

If you are pregnant, or think you may be pregnant, it is essential that you tell a member of your care team as soon as possible.

Where possible, radiation treatment will be delayed until after your baby is born. If treatment cannot be delayed, your care may be transferred to a specialist service (such as Auckland City Hospital), where treatment can be adapted to minimise radiation exposure to your baby.

Early notification allows your care team to make the safest possible treatment decisions and make changes where necessary.

Further information

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with your Radiation Oncologist.



FAQ's

Should I bring a support person?

Having a friend or relative with you during your treatment can provide a great deal of comfort and support. We understand just how important this is, and welcome you to have someone with you wherever possible. We make every effort to care not only for you, but also your support people and family/whānau. From welcoming them into ARO, to providing them with the information they need, we will help them to play a full role in your treatment journey.

If you have a larger support group, of more than 2 people, we ask that you call us ahead of time, as there is limited seating at ARO and we'd like to ensure that everyone is as comfortable as possible.

What are my rights as a patient?

All patients and their families have rights governed by the Health and Disability Commissioners Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights Regulation 1996. Auckland Radiation Oncology is committed to delivering your care in accordance with this.

More detail on these regulations can be found at www.hdc.org.nz including a translation of these rights into several languages.

Can I drive?

Under most circumstances there is no problem with driving yourself to and from treatment appointments. Your radiation oncologist will advise you if it's unwise to do so.

What about my safety?

To facilitate safe and effective delivery of treatment, positioning and holding methods will be used. Lifts and wheelchairs are available for those patients who require them. The Patient Health History form includes questions relating to your physical status. Please let us know if you need extra assistance so that we can plan your care safely.

Is ARO smoke free?

To ensure the health and safety of our employees and patients, and in accordance with the Smoke-free Environment Act, Auckland Radiation Oncology is smoke-free.

What if I am pregnant?

Radiation treatment may harm a developing baby. If you are pregnant, treatment may need to be delayed or adapted.

If there is any chance you could be pregnant, or might become pregnant during treatment, please tell a member of our team immediately before any scans or therapy.

Am I radioactive when I receive treatment?

No, the radiation you receive is electrically generated and is similar to having an x-ray.

Small doses of radiation are administered daily over a period ranging from several days to several weeks. Your body does not continue to hold the radiation after the daily therapy session ends. You may continue to have normal contact with others.

How do I know if the treatment has worked?

Your specialist team, which could consist of your surgeon, medical oncologist and radiation oncologist, will continue to see you in follow-up appointments for the weeks, months and years following your course of radiation therapy. They will take careful note of your condition, using clinical examinations and diagnostic tests, to determine how well you are doing. At some point they will either discharge you from their care or offer you further treatment options, depending on your progress.

Am I able to have more than one course of treatment of radiotherapy?

This is possible under some circumstances and depends on whether or not we are treating the same area as previously and what the total dose was to that area. This would be discussed with you by your radiation oncologist should the need arise.

Where can I find more information?

In the first instance, we recommend you visit our website www.aro.co.nz.

Our team is available at any time to answer questions or concerns that you may have about your treatment or possible side effects. You are welcome to contact our nurses to make an appointment.

What are your payment arrangements?

We will provide you with an indication of the costs of your radiation therapy once we have received detail of your expected treatment course.

In most cases we will facilitate the prior approval of your radiation treatment directly with your health insurance provider.

If you are a self-paying patient, prior to starting radiation therapy you will be required to pay the estimated cost of treatment in full. Eftpos, Mastercard and Visa credit card facilities are accepted.

Location and parking

ARO Epsom

98 Mountain Road, Epsom

Parking at ARO Epsom is free with validation. To ensure it is free, ARO must validate your vehicle — please have your licence plate number ready to enter into the iPad kiosk located at our reception.

1. ARO Patient Car Park – via Gate 5 (Almorah Road)

Enter through Gate 5 (Specialist Centre entrance) on Almorah Road. Drive straight ahead and up the ramp to the second level. At the top of the ramp, you will find designated ARO patient parking. Enter the building by going past Awanui Labs and through the double glass doors, and then turn left. ARO is directly ahead of you along the corridor.

2. Allevia Hospital Car Park – via Gate 1 (98 Mountain Road)

If ARO patient parks are full, enter through Gate 1 (Allevia Hospital Main Entrance) on Mountain Road. Park in any undesignated space on Level 1. From the carpark, use the Level 1 entry into the hospital. Turn right immediately after entering the first set of doors. ARO is directly ahead of you at the top of the small flight of stairs.

3. Street Parking (No Validation Required)

Free 120-minute street parking is available on Mountain Road, Gilgit Road, and Almorah Road. No validation is required for street parking.

Important Epsom Parking Notes

- Do not enter your licence plate into any parking machines — this will incur a charge we cannot cancel.
- Allow up to 30 minutes to find parking before your appointment. Parking is very limited across the Allevia Hospital campus, especially between 10 am and 2 pm, Tuesday to Thursday.
- ARO-designated spaces are reserved for patients, but availability can vary.

ARO North Shore

6 Antares Place, Rosedale, North Shore

Parking at ARO North Shore is free and there are three patient parking locations:

1. Outdoor Patient Parking

Multiple parks near the front entrance accessed through the first or second entrance off Antares Place.

2. Outdoor Accessible Parking

Two designated parks near the front entrance accessed through the first or second entrance off Antares Place.

3. Underground Parking

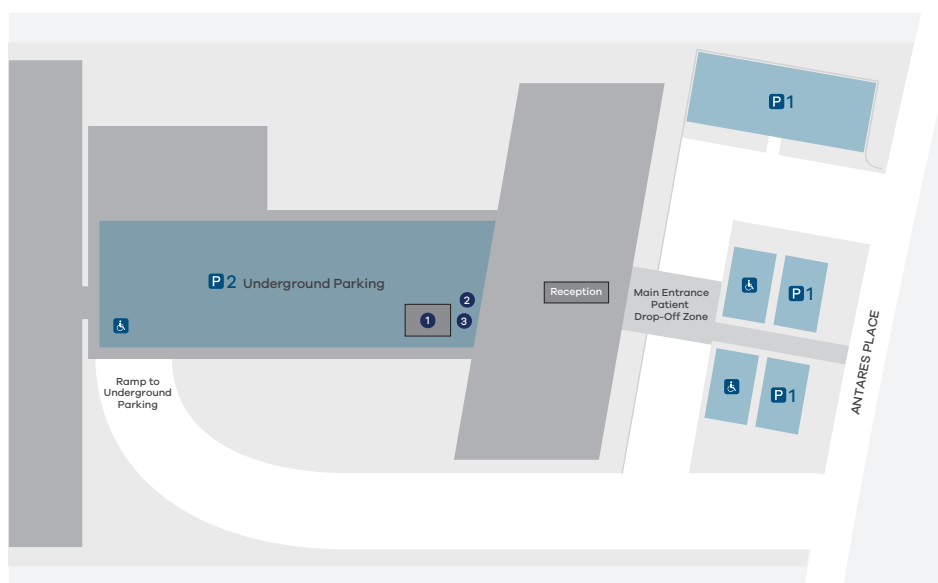
Undercover basement parking, accessed using the first entrance from Antares Place, driving along the side driveway and down the ramp leading underground. This parking is recommended for patients in wet weather or if an ARO wheelchair is required; these are located in the far right hand corner of the carpark near the basement lift. Go through the glass doors and foyer to the lift, select G Reception to the main ARO reception on the ground floor.

ARO Epsom



- 1 **Auckland Radiation Oncology**
- 2 **Ramp access to Allevia Hospital Parking**
- 3 **Canopy Cancer Care**
- 4 **Allevia Café and outdoor dining courtyard**
- 5 **Allevia Pharmacy**
- 6 **Awanui Labs (blood tests)**
- 7 **Allevia Radiology Epsom 2 (CT, ultrasound)**
- 8 **Allevia Radiology Epsom PET-CT**
- 9 **Allevia Radiology Epsom 1 (MRI/X-ray)**
- P1 **Dedicated ARO Patient Parking (if no parks available use P2 Allevia Hospital Car Parking)**
- P2 **Allevia Hospital Visitor Car Parking**

ARO North Shore



- 1 **Lift - access from basement underground parking to reception on the ground floor**
- 2 **Wheelchair storage - wheelchairs are available here for patients to use while visiting ARO**
- 3 **Bike Rack**
- Accessible Parking**
- P1 **Patient Parking**
- P2 **Underground Parking - ample patient car parks available undercover and with wheelchair access via the lift to reception**

My Treatment Notes

Special instructions

Medication updates

Useful information for staff

e.g. I have poor eyesight in my right eye, I am claustrophobic, I am hard of hearing in my left ear etc.

My questions

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Feedback

We value feedback, and are constantly striving to improve our care and service to patients. Once you have completed treatment we may ask you to fill out a short survey.

However if at any time you wish to pass on a compliment or make a complaint please speak to one of our receptionists, or make a complaint in writing to the manager of radiation services who will discuss your concerns confidentially.

Privacy Statement

We collect your personal and health information.
For information on what we collect, why we collect
it and who it will be shared with, please visit
[www.aro.co.nz](#) and search 'Privacy'.

Google Reviews

If you had a great experience, we would really appreciate a Google review. Simply scan the QR code below:



Epsom



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**Affiliated
Provider**