

### Spinal cord compression

What should you look out for if you have concerns or worries about spinal cord compression? If you notice any of the following signs or symptoms, it is essential that you get in touch with your oncologist, CNS or GP immediately:

Pain in your back	Back pain is often one of the first signs and may start off as just a slight pain but then get worse. It can be anywhere from your neck down. People often say that the pain feels like a 'band' around their chest or tummy or describe the pain as burning or shooting.
Numb feeling	A numbness or 'pins and needles' in your toes, fingers or over your bottom. It might also feel like a tingling or heaviness in your arms or legs.
Unsteady	You might notice that you are a bit more unsteady on your feet, walking might become a bit more difficult and your legs may feel weak.
Problems passing urine	You might find that it is a bit more difficult to hold urine in your bladder or that you don't pass very much urine or sometimes can't pass urine at all.
Bowel	You might find that you have difficulty controlling your bowels or you might find it difficult to open your bowels.

Contact your oncologist, CNS or GP immediately if you have:

- **Any new difficulty walking**
- **Reduced power/altered sensation**
- **Bowel/bladder difficulties**
- **Shooting pain that goes down your leg or new pain that feels like a band around your chest or stomach**

Contact number (s) to call in an emergency:

CNS.....

Oncologist.....

GP.....

Other number provided.....

## Important helpline information

### **Cancer Treatment Helpline - 0800 917 7711**

There is a national cancer treatment helpline in Scotland available 24 hours a day. Patients who are worried about symptoms or feel unwell whilst having certain chemotherapy or radiotherapy treatment for cancer can get in touch with the helpline. There will be someone available at the end of the phone who will be able to consider and review your symptoms then either:

- Offer advice;
- Arrange for you to see or speak with a cancer nurse or oncologist.

This means that you will get the most appropriate, effective and timely care, if you think you are feeling worse than before. You will be able to use this helpline for up to 6 weeks after your treatment has finished.

### **Call 0800 917 7711 to get in touch with the Cancer Treatment Helpline in Scotland**

### **Beatson Cancer Treatment Helpline - 0141 301 7990**

This helpline is only for patients on radiotherapy or chemotherapy who attend the Beatson West of Scotland Cancer Care Centre. It means that there is direct access to specialist oncology advice and staff who are specially trained to answer your calls and consider and review your symptoms. This runs 8am-8pm seven days a week; between 8pm each evening and 8am, calls will be re-directed to the National Cancer Treatment Helpline. You will be able to use this helpline for up to 6 weeks after your treatment has finished.

Call the Beatson radiotherapy helpline on 0141 301 7432. (only for those patients treated with radiotherapy and who attend the Beatson Cancer Care Centre)