

# Cancer pain could be reduced with fewer radiation treatments

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New results from the NCIC Clinical Trials Group (CTG) at Queen's University have shown that fewer radiation treatments can help relieve pain caused by the spread of cancer to bones. Specifically, the research shows patients could benefit from a single radiation treatment as compared with a treatment given daily for five or more days.

"The results of our trial show that most patients can be as effectively treated with a single dose of radiation therapy, which will be more convenient for them and will be associated with fewer side-effects than daily treatments for five days," says Ralph Meyer, Director of the NCIC Clinical Trials Group. "In addition, reducing the number of days of treatment would allow our cancer centres to provide the best treatments to the greatest number of patients in an efficient manner."

Between 2004 and 2012, 850 patients were enrolled in the trial which examined pain two months after the start of radiation. A benefit from [radiation therapy](#) was observed in 45 per cent of those treated in a single day while 51 per cent noticed a benefit after multiple treatments. Despite the strong numbers for multiple treatments, patients experienced more side-effects – including skin reddening, [nausea](#), lack of appetite, vomiting and diarrhea.

The overall survival of the two groups was identical.

The lead study author was Edward Chow (Sunnybrook Odette Cancer Centre and the University of Toronto). The study was made possible

through Queen's NCIC CTG's grant funding from the Canadian Cancer Society Research Institute. The NCIC CTG also receives grant funding support from the U.S. [National Cancer Institute](#).

The results of the trial were presented at the annual meeting of the [American Society of Clinical Oncology](#).

**More information:** [www.ctg.queensu.ca/](http://www.ctg.queensu.ca/)

Provided by Queen's University

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