RADIATION ONCOLOGISTS
Radiation oncologists are the doctors who will oversee your radiation therapy treatments. These physicians work with the other members of the radiation therapy team to develop your treatment plan and ensure that each treatment is given safely and accurately. Your radiation oncologist will also monitor your progress and adjust the treatment as necessary to make sure the radiation is hitting its target while minimizing side effects. Before, during, and after your radiation therapy treatments, your radiation oncologist works closely with other cancer doctors such as medical oncologists and surgeons to maximize the radiation's effectiveness.

Radiation oncologists are the only physicians with the expertise and training to prescribe and deliver radiation therapy treatments. In addition to college and medical school, five years of additional training are required for radiation oncologists. Radiation oncologists receive extensive training in cancer medicine, in the safe use of radiation to treat disease and in managing any side effects caused by radiation. Radiation oncologists must pass an examination by the American Board of Radiology to become board certified.

RADIATION THERAPISTS
Radiation therapists work under the supervision of the radiation oncologist to administer your daily radiation treatments.

Radiation therapists go through a two- to four-year educational program following high school or college by passing a special examination, radiation therapists may be certified by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists. In addition, many states require radiation therapists to be licensed. For more information on radiation therapists, contact the American Society of Radiologic Technologists at www.aart.org.

MEDICAL PHYSICIANS
Qualified medical physicists work closely with the radiation oncologist during treatment planning and delivery. They oversee the work of the dosimetrists and help ensure that complex treatments are properly tailored for each patient. Medical physicists review your daily radiation treatments to ensure that the beam is hitting its target and that the radiation is not damaging nearby tissue.

Medical physicists follow college with additional graduate training in medical physics to receive a master’s or doctoral degree. In some cases, a medical physicist will complete a one- to two-year program at a hospital after receiving a graduate degree for more training. Medical physicists may be certified by the American Board of Radiology or the American Board of Medical Physics. For more information on medical physicists, contact the American Association of Physicists in Medicine at www.aapm.org.

NURSING AND NURSE PRACTITIONERS
Radiation oncology nurses are licensed registered nurses or licensed practical nurses. Many registered nurses in radiation therapy have earned additional certification in the specialty of oncology nursing, and these nurses hold the O.C.N. (Oncology-Certified Nurse) designation. Advanced practice nurses, including clinical nurse specialists and nurse practitioners, have completed a master’s degree program. For more information on oncology nursing, contact the Oncology Nursing Society at www.ona.org.

PATIENT NAVIGATORS
A patient navigator is a social worker, nurse or other knowledgeable individual who can assist you in finding your way within the complex health care system. Patient navigators know who to call and where to go so your care may be most efficiently provided.

DENTISTS
Dentists may be involved in your care if you are receiving radiation for cancers of the mouth, throat or neck. Dentists may recommend that you have preventive dental work prior to radiation, and they will also help you manage the oral side effects of cancer therapy such as dry mouth or tooth or denture problems. A dental hygienist may also assist in performing these services under the supervision of a dentist.

DENTISTS
Physical therapists use therapeutic exercises to ensure that your body functions properly while you are undergoing treatment. These exercises are used to help manage side effects, alleviate pain and keep you healthy.

MEDICAL PHYSICIANS
Medical physicists follow college with additional graduate training in medical physics to receive a master’s degree. In some cases, a medical physicist will complete a one- to two-year program at a hospital after receiving a graduate degree for more training. Medical physicists may be certified by the American Board of Radiology or the American Board of Medical Physics. For more information on medical physicists, contact the American Association of Physicists in Medicine at www.aapm.org.

PATIENT NAVIGATORS
A patient navigator is a social worker, nurse or other knowledgeable individual who can assist you in finding your way within the complex health care system. Patient navigators know who to call and where to go so your care may be most efficiently provided.

DENTISTS
Dentists may be involved in your care if you are receiving radiation for cancers of the mouth, throat or neck. Dentists may recommend that you have preventive dental work prior to radiation, and they will also help you manage the oral side effects of cancer therapy such as dry mouth or tooth or denture problems. A dental hygienist may also assist in performing these services under the supervision of a dentist.

PHYSICAL THERAPISTS
Physical therapists use therapeutic exercises to ensure that your body functions properly while you are undergoing treatment. These exercises are used to help manage side effects, alleviate pain and keep you healthy.

PATIENT NAVIGATORS
A patient navigator is a social worker, nurse or other knowledgeable individual who can assist you in finding your way within the complex health care system. Patient navigators know who to call and where to go so your care may be most efficiently provided.

DENTISTS
Dentists may be involved in your care if you are receiving radiation for cancers of the mouth, throat or neck. Dentists may recommend that you have preventive dental work prior to radiation, and they will also help you manage the oral side effects of cancer therapy such as dry mouth or tooth or denture problems. A dental hygienist may also assist in performing these services under the supervision of a dentist.

PHYSICAL THERAPISTS
Physical therapists use therapeutic exercises to ensure that your body functions properly while you are undergoing treatment. These exercises are used to help manage side effects, alleviate pain and keep you healthy.

PATIENT NAVIGATORS
A patient navigator is a social worker, nurse or other knowledgeable individual who can assist you in finding your way within the complex health care system. Patient navigators know who to call and where to go so your care may be most efficiently provided.

DENTISTS
Dentists may be involved in your care if you are receiving radiation for cancers of the mouth, throat or neck. Dentists may recommend that you have preventive dental work prior to radiation, and they will also help you manage the oral side effects of cancer therapy such as dry mouth or tooth or denture problems. A dental hygienist may also assist in performing these services under the supervision of a dentist.
The Radiation Oncology Treatment Team

While you undergo radiation therapy, a team of highly trained medical professionals will be working together to make sure you receive the best possible care. Radiation oncologists are the doctors who oversee the care of each person undergoing radiation treatment. Other members of the treatment team include radiation therapists, radiation oncology nurses, medical physicists, dosimetrists, social workers, and nutritionists.

LOCATE A CANCER SPECIALIST
If you or a family member has been diagnosed with cancer, it’s important to meet with several cancer specialists, including a radiation oncologist. They will help you decide on the cancer treatment or treatments that work best for you, your cancer and your lifestyle. To find a radiation oncologist in your area, visit www.rtanswers.org.

ABOUT THE RADIATION ONCOLOGY TEAM
For information on what each of the radiation oncology team does or to locate a radiation oncologist near you, visit www.rtanswers.org.

ABOUT ASTRO
The American Society for Radiation Oncology is the largest radiation oncology society in the world with more than 10,000 members who specialize in treating patients with radiation therapies. ASTRO is dedicated to improving patient care through education, clinical practice, advancement of science and advocacy. Visit www.astro.org for more information.

LOCATE A CANCER SPECIALIST
If you or a family member has been diagnosed with cancer, it’s important to meet with several cancer specialists, including a radiation oncologist. They will help you decide on the cancer treatment or treatments that work best for you, your cancer and your lifestyle. To find a radiation oncologist in your area, visit www.rtanswers.org.

ABOUT THE RADIATION ONCOLOGY TEAM
For information on what each of the radiation oncology team does or to locate a radiation oncologist near you, visit www.rtanswers.org.

ABOUT ASTRO
The American Society for Radiation Oncology is the largest radiation oncology society in the world with more than 10,000 members who specialize in treating patients with radiation therapies. ASTRO is dedicated to improving patient care through education, clinical practice, advancement of science and advocacy. Visit www.astro.org for more information.

LOCATE A CANCER SPECIALIST
If you or a family member has been diagnosed with cancer, it’s important to meet with several cancer specialists, including a radiation oncologist. They will help you decide on the cancer treatment or treatments that work best for you, your cancer and your lifestyle. To find a radiation oncologist in your area, visit www.rtanswers.org.

ABOUT THE RADIATION ONCOLOGY TEAM
For information on what each of the radiation oncology team does or to locate a radiation oncologist near you, visit www.rtanswers.org.