

Arden Cancer Centre

Mould room

Introduction

Radiotherapy requires that you keep very still while having your treatment. This is especially important when areas such as your head and neck are treated. To help keep your head still we make an immobilisation mask or shell with adequate holes enabling you to breathe normally. Marks are placed on the shell to allow us to treat the same area each time you are treated.

Type of mask or shell

There are three types of masks made by the mould room.

- **Thermoplastic-shell:** used for head and neck treatments;
- **Plastic Shell:** used for electron treatments;
- **Lead Mask:** used for superficial skin treatments on the face to shield areas that are not for treatment.

What should you do prior to the mould room appointment?

If you have a beard or moustache it would be helpful to shave it off before you attend your appointment. If you need a haircut, please either have it cut before the first appointment or leave it until your treatment has finished.

How are they made?

Thermoplastic-shell

You will be asked to lie down and positioned on a headboard making sure you are straight. The staff will position you in the most optimal position for your treatment. You will need to close your eyes as the warm sheet is placed over your face, neck and sometimes your shoulders. A member of staff will be present with you throughout the whole process.

The Thermoplastic-sheet is connected to the headboard and the staff will hold it to your skin ensuring it forms a good impression of your shape.

Once the shell has cooled down and gone rigid it is removed.

This shell usually takes up to 30 minutes in total with 15 minutes of that being the impression.

You will then be taken to the CT scanner where you will have a CT scan taken while wearing the shell in order to prepare for your treatment.



Patient Information

Plastic Shell and Lead Mask

To make either of these masks we need to take an impression of the treatment area. We do this with a dental impression compound called alginate and Plaster of Paris bandage. The alginate is poured onto your skin and sets quickly.

Plaster of Paris bandage is then spread over the top and allowed to set in order to make the impression rigid so it can be removed. This usually takes about 20 minutes but may be longer for more complex shells.

Once your skin has been wiped clean of any traces of the plaster and alginate, you will receive your next appointment and be free to leave.

Your treatment mask will be made from your impression and will be ready within 1-2 weeks depending on your particular treatment, as some shells are more complex than others.

Does it hurt?

No.

- The Thermoplastic-sheet is warm when it goes on but it cools down quickly.
- The dental impression alginate is cold when it comes into contact with the skin but soon reaches body temperature.

Further Information

If you need any further information or advice please telephone **024 7696 7260** or **024 7696 7255**.

Patient Satisfaction

We hope that you have found this booklet helpful. We welcome your comments on the care that you experience and the service that we offer within the Arden Cancer Centre.

We ask that specific complaints be addressed to a member of staff so that, in line with University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust's complaints policy, they can be dealt with quickly and efficiently.

Written by Phil Sharpe, reviewed by Michael Brown (Dosimetrist). With help and advice from the Medical Staff of the Arden Cancer Centre, University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust, Coventry CV2 2DX

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 7290 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

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