

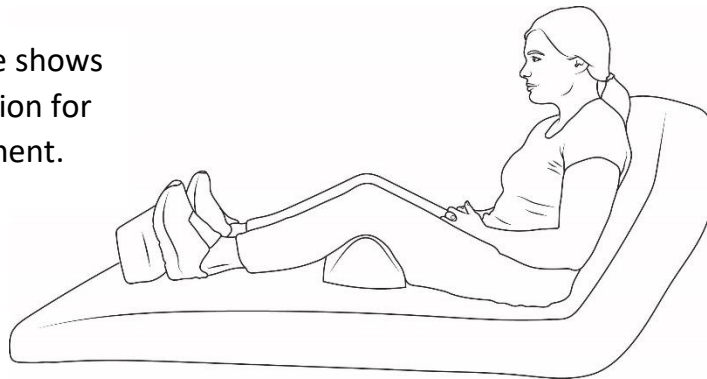
Total Body Irradiation

Total body irradiation, also known as TBI, is done in the hospital before a bone marrow or stem cell transplant. It is used to destroy cancer cells in places where chemo can't easily reach, and to help keep your body from rejecting the transplanted cells.

For adults, TBI is often given in 1 or 2 sessions. For children, TBI is often given twice a day for 3 to 4 days. Each session takes about 1 ½ to 2 hours, which includes set up and treatment. You cannot see or feel the radiation as it is being given.

A radiation therapist helps position your body for treatment. You lay on a cart with your head raised and knees bent. Your feet rest against a block so that you don't slide. You need to stay still for this treatment.

This image shows
your position for
the treatment.



When it's time to start, the therapist leaves the treatment room. They can see you on a TV screen and talk to you through a speaker.

Side effects

The most common short-term side effects from TBI happen a few days after treatment. They include nausea, diarrhea, dry mouth, fatigue, mouth sores and hair loss over the body. If needed, your nurse can give you medicines to help with nausea and diarrhea. Late side effects may happen 6 or more months after TBI. Some of these might include fatigue for many months, cataracts, other cancers and infertility.