## Genitourinary - Bladder: Nursing review and assessment

**Key questions**

1. **KQ:** What signs and symptoms may you be looking for when assessing a patient undergoing bladder cancer?

**Expected response:**

* + - Urinary: frequency, incomplete voiding, pain or burning upon urination, blood in the urine, increased urination at night, reduced strength of urine flow.
    - Bowel: Diarrhoea, increased flatulence, cramping and pain, mucousy or bloody stools, rectal bleeding
    - Sexual- Female: Pain during sexual intercourse
    - Sexual – Male: New onset of erectile dysfunction, painful ejaculation, absence of ejaculation
    - General: Fatigue, reddening of the skin in the treatment area, mood

1. **KQ:** What questions may you ask a bladder patient to assess their experience of treatment related side effects?

**Expected response:**

* + - Have you experienced any changes in your toilet habits?
    - Are you urinating more than normal?
    - Do you have any burning or pain when you urinate?
    - Are you moving your bowels more than normal?
    - Have you noticed changes in your bowel habits?
    - Have you felt more tired than normal?
    - Have you experienced any changes in sexual function?
    - How is the skin feeling in the treatment area?
    - Have you noticed any changes to your skin in the treatment area?
    - How are you feeling in yourself?

**Scenarios**

1. **Scenario:** You are performing the weekly assessment for a patient undergoing treatment to their bladder. They have been prescribed 64Gy in 32# and have just completed their 15th treatment fraction. During the assessment the patient mentions that they have been suffering diarrhoea the last 48 hours days. They attribute this to a spicy meal they ate over the weekend. What action would you take based on this? What advice would you give?

**Expected response:**

* Advise patient that diarrhoea may be a side effect of radiation therapy treatment. Ask follow up questions to determine grade experienced e.g. how many episodes in the last 24 hours? Any pain or cramping? Stool consistency? Blood or mucous present in stools?
* Use universal grading tool if appropriate.
* Counsel patient regarding diet: avoid foods which may irritate the bowels, such as spicy foods, alcohol, and caffeine. Maintain oral intake of fluid and food. Assess the need for additional fluid replacement and provide advice accordingly.
* Counsel patient regarding symptom management: Use of antidiarrheal if appropriate and not contraindicated.
* Document assessment in patient notes.