

## Mayo Clinic Minute: Radiation therapy for patients with breast cancer

Radiation therapy is a common component of breast cancer treatment for patients. The high-powered beams of intense energy kill cancer cells and reduce the risk of the cancer recurring.

[Dr. Laura Vallow](#), chair of the Radiation Oncology Department at Mayo Clinic in Florida, explains how innovation is transforming [radiation](#) treatments.

Video	Audio
	<p>(nats from radiation machine)</p> <p>Patients with breast cancer now have more options when it comes to radiation treatments. The goal is to remove any remaining cancer cells following chemotherapy or surgery.</p>
<p>Laura Vallow, M.D. Radiation Oncology Mayo Clinic</p>	<p>"In other situations, we use radiation if the cancer is more advanced, or spread to the lymph nodes."</p>
	<p>Advancements in technology allow healthcare professionals to treat patients more safely. One technique called "prone positioning" reduces the chance of beams targeting other organs. For this procedure, patients lie on their stomachs.</p>
	<p>"We take advantage of gravity, the breast pulls away from the body, and we can treat the breast without exposing the underlying lung and heart to unnecessary radiation."</p>
	<p>Intensity-modulated radiation therapy is cutting-edge. Unlike traditional radiation, this procedure delivers X-rays directly to the targeted area from multiple angles, allowing for higher, more effective doses.</p>
	<p>"Before intensity-modulated radiation therapy, we were not able to conform the dose around the chest wall."</p>

	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Sonya Goins.