



RADIATION TREATMENT TO THE SKIN

The following information will help you manage the effects you may experience from radiation therapy to the skin. Your treatment team will provide you with any additional information you need. Please ask them any questions you may have.

DURING YOUR TREATMENT

If you have hair in the treated area, you may lose some or all of it. The dose of radiation will determine the amount and duration of hair loss.

In regard to the treated area, bathe or shower daily or every other day in warm water. Do not bathe in very hot or very cold water. Use a mild soap sparingly. Some mild soaps are Dove, Tone, Basis, Lowila, Oilatum and Emulave.

DO:

- Wear loose-fitting clothing such as a cotton T-shirt over treated areas normally covered with clothing.
- Avoid any clothing that rubs the treated area.
- Apply pressure to help relieve itching.
- Avoid exposing treated skin to direct sunlight.
- Avoid shaving treated skin. If you do shave, use only an electric razor.
- Tell your doctor, nurse or one of your radiation therapists if you develop any new rash that is red, itchy or raw.

DO NOT:

- Use lotion, powder or cream on treated skin unless recommended by your doctor.
 - Use a hot water bottle, heating pad or ice bag on treated skin.
 - Scratch treated skin.
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HOW TO CARE FOR SKIN REACTIONS

REDDENED SKIN:

- Apply a thin layer of Aquaphor three times a day.
- Do not apply Aquaphor over radiation skin markings.
- Leave open to air as much as possible.

SKIN THAT IS PEELING, BLISTERING OR SHEDDING:

- Using sterile water or tap water, saturate a 4" x 4" piece of sterile gauze in solution and place over skin reaction. Allow to soak for 2 to 3 minutes.
 - Pat dry and apply a thin layer of Aquaphor as needed between soaks.
 - Repeat three times a day.
 - Do not apply Aquaphor over radiation markings within one hour before radiation treatments.
 - Leave open to air as much as possible.
 - Consult with your radiation oncologist if your skin does not improve.
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AFTER COMPLETION OF TREATMENT

Your doctor may prescribe a skin care treatment and a cream or ointment for your skin. If so, use as directed in place of Aquaphor.

Your skin's reaction to the radiation therapy may increase for about seven days after your final treatment and then subside. Protect treated skin, particularly any areas where the skin is broken. Soft clothing such as a cotton T-shirt can provide protection and greater comfort.

Continue skin care as directed by your doctor. Apply recommended cream or ointment as needed.

Do not expose treated skin which is still red to prolonged direct sunlight. After redness subsides, use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher on treated skin exposed to prolonged direct sunlight.

AFTER HOURS

If you need immediate emergency medical attention, please dial 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. All other medical attention outside of the Center's regular office hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday) will be answered by our telephone answering service who will have a doctor from Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center return your call.

TELEPHONE:

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