

Basic Skin Care

During your radiation therapy, the skin in the treatment field can react much like a sun-burn. Usually, the changes to your skin will happen slowly. Most often, there are no visible signs for the first 2 weeks. After that time, you may notice your skin becoming dry and pink. As treatment continues, the skin may become more red. The dryness may become flaky and you may feel a sunburn-like sensation.

Following the basic skin care instructions below can help minimize your skin's reaction to radiation treatments.

BASIC SKIN CARE

Bathing or Showering

- Use lukewarm water with a mild soap that will not dry the skin, such as Fragrance Free Dove or Basis.
- Using your hand only, lather the skin, rinse and pat dry. Do not use a washcloth, sponge, or nylon scrubber.
- Do not wash off marks that the technicians place on your skin.

Moisturizing

- Apply a healing gel (aloe vera or calendula) up to 3 times per day and allow to dry. Then you can apply a moisturizer (Eucerin, Aveeno or Aquaphor).
Note: Avoid applying gels or moisturizers directly before treatment time. It is OK to apply moisturizers immediately after treatment.

Other Guidelines

- Do not use aluminum-containing antiperspirant on the treated skin. Tom's of Maine brand deodorant is a good option.
- Do not shave any skin in the treatment area using a razor blade.
- Do not use hot tubs, saunas or jacuzzis.
- Avoid using ice packs or heating pads on the treatment area.
- Before swimming in chlorinated pools or the ocean, please ask your nurse or physician.
- Avoid exposing your treated skin to direct sunlight.

If you have any questions or problems, please ask your nurse or physician.