

Radiation treatments may cause changes to the skin in the area that is receiving the radiation. These changes, which are most frequently reported as red, dry, tanned, peeling or itchy skin, can occur 1-3 weeks after treatment begins. Avoid scratching the skin, even if it itches. In most cases, these changes will resolve about 3 weeks after the completion of radiation. Please notify your nurse, therapist or physician of any changes, especially if the area is blistered, swollen, tender or moist.

CARING FOR YOUR SKIN IN THE TREATED AREA:

Clothing/Dressing:

- Wear loose, soft clothing. Avoid bras or clothing items that may rub the skin.
- Do not apply adhesive tape, medicated patches or adhesive bandages.

Toiletries/Products on the Skin:

- Do not use any creams or lotions in the treated area unless prescribed by your oncologist.
- Do not apply perfumes or fragrances.
- It is expected that any body hair in the area will fall out 2-3 weeks after beginning treatment. However, if you are going to shave, use an electric razor.

Temperature/Outdoor Exposure

- Avoid applying extreme heat or cold to the treated area (e.g. heating pads, hot water bottles, ice packs).
- Limit exposure to hot or cold weather.
- Apply PABA-free sunscreen with SPF 15 or greater if planning to be out in sun for longer than 10 minutes.
- Avoid turning the heater up too high in the home as this can lead to drying of the skin.

Bathing

- Take very short baths or showers no more than once-a-day with lukewarm water.
- Do not rub, scrub or massage the treated area.
- Use mild soap.
- Take special care not to remove the ink marks on the skin.

Overall health

- Drink at least 8-10, 8-ounce glasses of fluid each day unless otherwise instructed by your physician.
- Eat a balanced diet.