

# Tips for Managing Hand-foot Syndrome

(Redness, Pain, and Swelling on Palms and Soles)



## Things you can do on your own

- Avoid activities that put extra stress on your feet, including:
  - Long walks or running
  - Exercise that has a lot of stop-and-go action, like basketball
- Avoid activities that put extra stress on your hands, including:
  - Raking leaves or gardening
  - Shoveling
  - Hammering, or doing other manual labor
  - Washing dishes by hand
- Avoid wearing gloves, unless they are soft.
- Avoid hot water.
- Avoid allowing your skin to come into contact with harsh chemicals when cleaning.
- Protect and soothe your hands and feet.
  - Wear padded shoes.
  - Soak your feet in warm water for 20-30 minutes per day.
  - Apply ice packs to your hands or feet for 15-20 minutes at a time.
  - Keep your hands and feet moisturized by applying ointment like Aquaphor and Eucerin ointments after soaking.
- Check with your care team about whether your cancer medication doses need to be changed.



## With over-the-counter medications

**Ask your care team if you can take over-the-counter medications. You can buy these medications at your local drugstore to help with your hand-foot syndrome. Take them as directed on the package.**

- Apply a topical pain reliever such as lidocaine.
- Take a pain reliever such as acetaminophen (Tylenol).



## With the help of your care team

**Ask your care team if you need a prescription corticosteroid (like dexamethasone) to treat and prevent hand-foot syndrome.**



## When to call your care team for help

- If your hands or feet show signs of infection such as pus or bleeding
- If you cannot walk due to pain in your feet, or are unable to do other daily activities



For more information and support, visit the American Cancer Society website at [cancer.org/hand-foot-syndrome](https://cancer.org/hand-foot-syndrome) or call us at **1-800-227-2345**. We're here when you need us.