

Skin Care during Radiation Therapy

The skin in your treatment area may become red, tanned or dry. Skin changes often occur 2 to 3 weeks after radiation starts. These changes are normal and often go away after treatment is done.

Basic skin care

- **Use only those lotions and skin products that your radiation team suggests.** Apply them in a thin layer. You don't need to remove them before treatment. It is ok to wear deodorant for your treatments.
- Wash your skin gently each day with lukewarm water and unscented soap like Dove or Neutrogena. If you have markings for your treatment, don't wash them off. Dry yourself with a soft towel by patting, not rubbing, your skin.
- Use an electric razor if you must shave the treatment area.
- Keep the area clean. For example, if your treatment area is on your leg, avoid activities like kneeling in dirt or gardening that might expose the area to bacteria.

Ways to protect your skin

- Avoid having your treatment area in the direct sun until your skin has fully healed.
- Wear loose clothes over the treatment site. Avoid scratching, rubbing or pressure on treated skin.
- Don't use heating pads, hot water bottles or sun lamps. Don't put ice or cold packs on your skin unless your radiation team tells you to do so.

Reasons to call your radiation doctor or nurse

- Blisters, sores or moist areas on your skin
- Questions or concerns about how your skin looks or feels

This info is a general resource. It is not meant to replace your doctor's advice. Ask your doctor or health care team any questions. Always follow their instructions.