



SKIN REACTIONS CAUSED BY RADIATION THERAPY



Skin reactions may occur in the treatment area and the severity varies. Not all patients who receive radiation therapy will have skin reactions.

This fact sheet aims at explaining some of the underlying skin reactions so that patients and their relatives can better prepare for skin care after the start of radiation therapy.



COMMON SKIN REACTIONS

- ONLY appear in the treatment region;
- Most of the patients only have mild skin reactions/changes, for example:
 1. Redness (like sunburn) or irritation
 2. Dryness, itchiness or mild skin-peeling
- Skin reactions are temporary and will gradually diminish in several weeks after the end of radiation therapy.
- Depending on your condition, your oncologist may offer you prescribed gel to relieve the treatment-induced skin reactions.

UNCOMMON SKIN REACTIONS

- ▶ Severe skin reactions are not common, they only appear in the late stage of treatment in few patients.
- ▶ Apparent skin change include:
 1. Skin-darkening
 2. Serious skin-peeling
 3. Swelling or inflammation
- ▶ Uncommon skin reactions will also be alleviated in several weeks after the end of the radiation therapy.
- ▶ Depending on your condition, your oncologist may offer you prescribed gel to relieve the treatment-induced skin reactions.

SKIN MARKS FOR TREATMENT-POSITIONING




- Radiation therapists might draw lines on your skin for treatment positioning.
- Avoid washing them away during your routine cleaning, do not draw lines by yourself, even if they are faded.

REMINDERS

- ✗ Do not scrub and scratch the treatment area
- ✗ Do not use non-prescribed gels, lotions, perfume, powder or deodorants over the treatment area
- ✗ Do not use heating pads or ice pads
- ✗ Avoid aquatic or vigorous activities
- ✗ Avoid sunbathing

SKINCARE DURING TREATMENT

DAILY CLOTHING

-  Wear loose and soft clothing
-  Avoid tight and rough clothing that may rub against the treatment area
-  Avoid wearing accessories

DAILY CLEANING

Treatment Area

- Keep the skin clean and dry
- Gently wash your skin with lukewarm water and sop up with a soft cloth
- Wash with mild, neutral and fragrance-free soap
- Use an electric shaver rather than a manual shaver

Non-Treatment Area

- Showering rather than bathing
- Shorten your showering time
- Wash with mild, neutral and fragrance-free soap

MEDICATION

- Your oncologist may offer you prescribed gel to relieve the treatment-induced skin reactions
- Apply a thin layer of prescribed gel over the treatment area
- Avoid using the gel within 2 hours before treatment
- Avoid using any non-prescribed gel.

For any enquiries, ask your doctor or other healthcare professionals!

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