

PROSTATE CANCER

Caring for Yourself During Treatment

Skin and Hair Reactions

During treatment, you will probably not notice any changes in your skin in the area being treated. However, you may lose some or all of the hair in your pubic area. The hair will usually grow back 3 to 6 months after treatment is done; however, the color and texture may be different.

Below are guidelines to help you care for your skin during treatment. These guidelines refer **only** to the skin in the area being treated with radiation.

Keep your skin clean

- Bathe or shower daily using warm water and a mild unscented soap, such as Neutrogena®, Dove®, baby soap, Basis®, or Cetaphil®. Rinse your skin well and pat it dry with a soft towel.
- When washing, be gentle with your skin in the area being treated. Do not use a washcloth, a scrubbing cloth, or brush.
- If you received tattoo marks before your treatment, they are permanent and won't wash off. You may get other markings during treatment such a dot or cross-hair covered by a clear protective sticker. You can remove these markings only when your therapists say it's okay.
- Do not use alcohol or alcohol pads on your skin in the area being treated. Also, do not use astringents, which are substances that shrink your body tissues. Two examples of astringents are calamine lotion and witch hazel.

Moisturize your skin often

- The moisturizer we recommend for all patients is MIADERM® Radiation Relief. Your therapist will suggest that you start applying MIADERM® onto the treatment area 2 times a day before your radiation treatments even begin. This regimen has shown to decrease the severity of radiation dermatitis. Over-the-counter moisturizers you can use include Aquaphor®, Aloe Vera leaves, or clear Aloe Vera gel. There is no evidence that one is better than another. If you are using a moisturizer, apply it 2 times a day unless otherwise instructed by your doctor, radiation therapist, or medical assistant.
 - If your radiation treatment is in the morning, apply the moisturizer:
 - After your treatment.
 - Before you go to bed.
 - If your radiation treatment is in the afternoon, apply the moisturizer:

- In the morning, at least 4 hours before your treatment.
- Before you go to bed.
- On the weekends and on days that you don't have treatment apply the moisturizer:
 - In the morning.
 - Before you go to bed.

Avoid irritating the skin in the area being treated

- Wear loose-fitting cotton clothing in the area being treated. Do not wear tight clothing that will rub against your skin.
- Use only the moisturizers, creams, or lotions that are recommended by your doctor or therapist.
- If your skin is itchy, do not scratch it. Apply moisturizer. Ask your therapist for recommendations on how to relieve the itching.
- Do not let your treated skin come into contact with extreme hot or cold temperatures. This includes hot tubs, water bottles, heating pads, and ice packs.
- Avoid tanning or burning your skin during treatment and for the rest of your life. If you are going to be in the sun, use a PABA-free sunblock with an SPF of 30 or higher. Also, wear loose-fitting clothing that covers you as much as possible.

Diet and Nutrition

During radiation, dietary modification usually helps reduce the frequency and severity of diarrhea.

Foods to avoid

- Fried and/or greasy foods
- Highly spiced foods

Foods to reduce

- Insoluble fiber foods: lettuce, cauliflower, broccoli, etc...

Foods to maintain

- Lean proteins: turkey, chicken, & fish

Foods to increase

- Soluble-Fiber foods & low fiber foods: bananas, mashed potatoes, applesauce, white rice, canned or cooked fruits and vegetables
- Fluid intake

Fatigue

Fatigue may occur later in radiation therapy treatment. Consider taking a nap during the day. If working, consider decreasing work hours or taking a leave, if possible. However, try to maintain a level of physical activity and a well-

rounded diet. Nutritionists are available to provide assistance if desired. Inform you doctor, therapist, or medical assistant if the fatigue becomes severe.

Additional Resources

Malecare

212-844-8369

www.malecare.org

Prostate Cancer Foundation

1-800-757-CURE

www.prostatecancerfoundation.org

Us TOO! Prostate Cancer Education and Support

630-795-1002

www.ustoo.com

ZERO - Project to End Prostate Cancer

202-463-9455

www.zerocancer.org