



# Skin Reactions- Radiation Treatment Guide

Radiation Therapy is an accurate localized treatment using beams of radiation to treat patients with cancer and benign tumors alike. Only the tissue within the treatment field is affected. Most people having radiation therapy treatment may experience skin changes. Please follow the instructions outlined below if you start to experience any of the changes. The common types of skin changes are:

- 1 Redness
- 2 Dry Peeling
- 3 Moist peeling

## 1. Skin Care Instructions For All Patients Under Treatment:

- Wash with a fragrance free soap such as Dove or Aveeno, using lukewarm water.
- Skin in treatment area should be clean and dry.
- Do not apply any lotions or creams to the treatment area at least 4 hours prior to your appointment. After treatment you will be given instructions by the nurse or doctor to apply a moisturizing cream that is perfume free. *Examples: Calendula, Vanicream, Aquaphor, Udderly Smooth, & Miaderm.*
- You may use deodorant to skin that is intact and not irritated. You may use organic products.
- Avoid shaving the skin that is being treated. Electric razors may be used only if absolutely necessary.
- Avoid extreme hot or cold temperatures to the treated skin.
- Wear comfortable loose fitting clothing. If undergoing breast treatment, avoid underwire bras. Sports bras, camisoles, and plain cotton tank tops are preferred.
- Completely avoid sun exposure to the skin in the treated area. SPF30 is recommended.
- If the head is in the treatment field, use gentle fragrance free shampoo.
- Maintaining good nutrition will promote wound healing.
- Good hand washing will decrease the risk of infection.

## 2. Redness

- May appear on the skin in the treatment area and may occur after 5-10 treatments. It can also cause raised, small itchy bumps. If you experience any of these symptoms, we suggest:
  - ~Avoid extreme hot or cold temperatures to the treated skin.
  - ~ Apply a moisturizing cream that is perfume free.  
*Examples are: Calendula, Vanicream, Aquaphor, Udderly Smooth*
  - ~ Wash with a fragrance free soap such as Dove or Aveeno, using lukewarm water

## 3. Dry peeling

- Can occur to the skin in the treatment area. It may appear following about 5-10 treatments. It is characterized as reddened skin that is dry, flaky, or peeling. If you experience any of these symptoms, we suggest:
  - ~Avoid extreme hot or cold temperatures to the treated skin.
  - ~ Apply a moisturizing cream that is perfume free.  
*Examples are: Calendula, Vanicream, Aquaphor, Udderly Smooth*
  - ~ Wash with a fragrance free soap such as Dove or Aveeno, using lukewarm water

#### 4. Wet peeling

- Wet peeling does not occur in all patients. It may occur in areas of skin folds, for example under the arm, under the breast, groin, and any area where friction may occur. It is characterized as moist, open skin that could have wet drainage. Wet peeling may appear after 3 to 4 weeks of treatment. If you should experience these symptoms, specific recommendations will be made by your physician.

The doctor will assess your skin and may prescribe an antibiotic or dressing that will help with healing and comfort.