

### **Skin**

- It is important to keep the skin in the area receiving radiation treatments moisturized with products containing aloe vera, vitamin E or lanolin. This helps to minimize the skin irritation from radiation therapy. These products should be applied two to three times a day for maximum benefit. Do not put anything on the skin four hours prior to your radiation treatment. If your skin should become irritated and you experience extreme peeling or oozing, please contact your doctor for additional instructions
- During treatment, gently cleanse the skin with a mild soap and lukewarm water. Pat the skin dry and be careful not to remove the marks for the treatment.
- Avoid wearing tight fitting clothes over the skin of the treatment area.
- Do not expose the skin in the treatment area to direct sunlight for prolonged periods of time.
- Do not use deodorants, perfumes, cosmetics or powder on the treated skin. You may resume use of these products after your treatment is complete and any skin irritation has resolved. .
- Skin reactions from radiation therapy are temporary and should go away a few weeks after the treatment is completed.

### **Fatigue**

Many patients experience fatigue during their course of treatment. The exact cause may not be known. It could be a result of the disease itself, the treatment, lowered blood counts, poor appetite, loss of sleep, or pain. Many patients start to feel tired after about two to three weeks of radiation treatments.

- Radiation induced fatigue will resolve several weeks after completion of therapy.
- Good nutrition is important.
- Take frequent rest breaks if you experience significant fatigue during your treatment.
- Ask family members and friends to help out with daily chores and errands.

### **Mouth**

If any part of the mouth is in the treatment field, you may experience inflammation of the lining inside your mouth called mucositis. The symptoms usually begin after one to two weeks of radiation treatments.

- Avoid foods that may further irritate the lining of the mouth such as, spicy foods, carbonated or alcoholic beverages, and acidic fruits, such as grapefruit, oranges, lemons, pineapple or tomatoes.
- Antacids mixed with numbing medications may be helpful in relieving symptoms. This mouth soreness is temporary and will go away a few weeks after the treatments are complete.

### Esophagus

When the neck or chest area is treated, patients may develop pain with swallowing. This may be a result of inflammation of the lining of the esophagus.

- Antacids mixed with numbing medications may be helpful in relieving symptoms. Your doctor will prescribe this for you. This inflammation is temporary and will resolve several weeks after completion of your treatment.

### Nausea

Patients receiving radiation therapy to the abdomen and rarely, the brain may experience nausea and vomiting.

- These can be controlled with medications prescribed by your physician.
- It is important to drink plenty of fluids.
- If your symptoms are severe and you become dehydrated, you may need intravenous fluids.

### Diarrhea

Patients receiving radiation treatment to the pelvis area may experience diarrhea.

- In most instances, this can be controlled with over the counter medications such as loperamide hydrochloride.
- Patients should follow a low residue diet and avoid foods high in fiber, spicy or fried foods.
- Please drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration.
- If your diarrhea is not controlled with these suggestions, please contact your doctor for additional instructions.
- The symptoms should resolve a few weeks after the treatment is complete.

### Bladder

Patients receiving radiation treatment to the pelvis area may experience temporary irritation of the lining of the bladder or urethra. This can result in burning with urination or frequent urination. Patients may also experience spasm like sensations when urinating.

- Drinking acidic juices such as cranberry juice may be helpful.
- Avoid substances that may irritate the bladder such as tobacco, tea, coffee, spicy foods and alcoholic beverages.
- Your doctor can prescribe medications to help relieve the symptoms.