Skin Care Instructions for Patients Receiving Radiation Therapy

About 2 weeks after your first treatment your skin in the treated area may become red or irritated. There are several things you can do NOW to minimize this:

1. Use a mild unscented soap like Dove, Basis or Eucerine to cleanse the skin in the treatment area. Do not apply ointments, salves, deodorants, perfumes, cosmetics, or other self-remedies during the treatment period or for 2 weeks after the treatment is over, unless these are ordered by your doctor.

2. Do not use hot water bottles, electric heating pads, hot packs, or heating lights to the treatment area. Only use an electric razor to shave the treatment area, if shaving is necessary.

3. When you bathe, use lukewarm water only and pat the skin dry. To be sure the skin is dry, you may use a fan, air conditioner, hair dryer (on a cold setting), or expose the skin to room air for 10 minutes. Do not scrub the skin when washing or drying. Do not remove the marks we have put on your skin.

4. If the skin becomes dry or itches, ask the nurse for cream or lotion especially for this problem.

5. Keep the treated areas out of the sun. Protect the area with lightweight clothing, hat or shade. The skin in this area will be sensitive to the sun for about a year. Do not use sun block while in treatment. The chemicals are irritating to treated skin.

6. Do not be alarmed by skin changes such as redness, tanning or dryness. These reactions are frequently necessary. They are temporary and will disappear within a few weeks after treatment has ended.

7. If you develop an open skin reaction, report this to the therapist, nurse, or doctor. Keep the area clean, dry and open to air as much as possible. Wear only loose-fitting cotton clothing over the reactive skin to avoid further irritation.

8. Food is very important. Keep you nutrition at its peak during the course of therapy. Try not to lose weight.

Feel free to ask any questions or share your concerns related to your treatments. You may call between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Our phone number is 313-916-1021.