



THE AUSTIN CENTER
FOR
RADIATION ONCOLOGY

PATIENT CARE INFORMATION FOR RADIATION THERAPY TO THE CHEST/BREAST

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS:

- **Local:**
 - Radiation dermatitis irritation – irritation, redness, and/or itching of the skin in the treatment area
 - Difficulty swallowing
 - Cough
 - Heartburn
 - Hair loss in the treatment area

- **General:**
 - Fatigue, loss of energy
 - Lowering of the blood counts

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

You will be receiving radiation therapy treatments from a machine called a Linear Accelerator. During treatment, the skin in the treatment field is likely to undergo some changes. Please help us to protect and care for this area by following the instructions, and alerting us of any problems or concerns you may have.

SKIN CARE: (Applies only to the treatment area)

- Wash area GENTLY
- Use hands, not a wash cloth
- Use a mild cleanser (Dove, Basis)
- Pat dry
- Avoid rubbing, massage, or friction
- Moisturize the skin using ONLY recommended products:

LOTIONS:

Eucerine
Lubriderm
Biafine (this is a prescription)
Pure Aloe Vera Gel
Aveeno

OINTMENTS:

Aquaphor

** **DO NOT** apply anything to the skin at least **FOUR** hours **BEFORE** treatment **

*** **ONLY** apply after treatment ***

- Protect skin from the sun
- Avoid injury, trauma, or scratching in the treatment area
- Avoid perfumes, powders, and deodorants to the treatment area
- Use natural deodorants (no alcohol or perfumes)
- The skin gradually returns to normal over 4-6 weeks following treatment
- Shave only with an electric razor

MOIST DESQUAMATION

Definition: Moist desquamation is a description of the clinical pattern seen as a consequence of radiation exposure where the skin thins and then begins to weep because of loss of integrity of the epithelial barrier.

If Moist Desquamation occurs (may occur 5-6 weeks into treatment);

- DO NOT use Cortisone or Cornstarch
- Continue skin care measures listed above... PLUS:
 - Gentle cleansing with ¼ strength hydrogen peroxide
 - Rinse well with water
 - Expose skin to air 10-15 minutes three times daily
 - To dry the area you may pat gently or air dry
 - Apply ointments or dressings as directed
 - May use topical lidocaine