

Caring for Your Skin in the Groin and Anal Area (Perineum) During Radiation Therapy

Read this pamphlet to learn helpful tips on caring for your skin in the groin and anal area (perineum) before, during and after having radiation therapy.

For more information on Radiation Therapy, please watch our [Patient Education videos](#). These videos offer a step-by-step guide to the radiation therapy treatment process. They also explain how radiation works in the body and how your team works together to deliver the highest quality treatments.





Things you can do:

- Wash the treated area gently with warm water using a mild, unscented soap such as baby soap or Dove®.
- Take showers instead of baths. Sitz baths may help. Dry the skin using a soft towel or a hairdryer on a cool setting.
- You can apply creams or lotions on dry skin, such as Lubriderm or Glaxal Base cream. You can buy these creams or lotions over the counter without a prescription. You do not have to remove creams or ointments from your skin right before your treatment.
- If urine splashes on your sore skin, try sitting in different positions on the toilet. It may help to use a clean jug filled with warm water to clean the area as you urinate. Then pat the area dry afterwards.
- When using the toilet use only soft toilet paper.
- Walking can make the skin more sore as it rubs against itself. Rest a lot and loosen your clothing to let air get into the sore areas.
- Wear natural fibres such as cotton instead of synthetic fibres.



Things to avoid on sore or treated skin:

- Do not use products like perfume or talcum powder on the skin that is being treated.
- Do not use sticky dressing tape on treated skin.
- Do not wear tight, restrictive clothing against treated skin. Make sure that your underwear is loose-fitting, or do not wear any at all



Things to ask the radiation therapist, radiation nurse or radiation oncologist:

- Ask about the sitz bath recipe and instructions. This will help sooth the sore skin.
- If your skin is itchy or sore, ask your therapist, nurse or doctor for other options.
- If you notice any open areas or sores, please tell your radiation therapist, nurse or doctor. Your doctor may have to prescribe you other creams or medications.
- Please tell the staff if you have any fluid oozing from the treated area. A barrier cream may help.

Need more information?

Please visit the Patient and Family Library on the main floor, or call them at 416 946 4501 extension 5383.

You can also visit the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre web site at www.theprincessmargaret.ca for more information and resources about your treatment and also services at Princess Margaret.

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