



Radiation to the Breast

When receiving radiation treatments, you may experience side effects, which your doctor will discuss with you. The side effects vary depending on your tumor and the technique used to treat it. Some side effects may go away over time.

Common Side Effects

- Fatigue
- Skin dryness or itchiness
- Skin discoloration
- Skin breakdown/peeling

Key Reminders

- Do not wash off your treatment marks.
- Keep the treatment area as dry as possible.
- Use a gentle moisturizing soap, such as Dove or Caress, in the treatment area.
- Do not use a washcloth or loofah sponge inside the treatment area.

- If the treatment area extends into your armpit, do not use a straight-edged razor or apply deodorant under that arm. You may use cornstarch instead of deodorant after each treatment.
- Do not wear tight or restrictive clothing. Ask your radiation therapist or nurse if you should wear a bra, camisole or cotton T-shirt.
- Do not expose the treatment area to the sun, heat lamps, tanning beds, heating pads or ice packs. This restriction applies indefinitely.
- If you develop moisture under the breast or around the armpit, expose the skin to air to help dry it.
- Do not apply lotions or creams **4 hours** before your radiation treatment. You may apply them after treatment.

If you experience problems related to side effects, please notify your doctor, nurse or radiation therapist. You may need a prescription to help relieve some of your side effects.