Radiation Therapy to the Breast

About 2 to 3 weeks after your first treatment, you may notice skin changes of your chest. These changes are a part of your therapy and are short-term. The following instructions will help you care for these areas and decrease the effects of radiation.

**Skin Care**
- Do not remove the colored marks from your skin. These outline the area to be treated and must remain in place until treatments are completed.
- Wash with lukewarm water only and pat dry. Do not scrub.
- Avoid all soaps, lotions, ointments, cosmetics, and perfumed powders on the treatment area. Your physician may prescribe or suggest cream that can be applied daily after your treatment.
- Do not shave or use deodorant under the arm on the side being treated. You may dust the area with baby powder or cornstarch.
- Do not use heating pads or ice bags on the treatment area. Keep the treated area out of the sun.
- Wear a loose-fitting bra with no underwire or boning. Check with your doctor about wearing your prosthesis.
- Skin changes such as redness, dryness, peeling, and tanning can happen. Itching and dryness may occur. Do not scratch your skin. Please report any break in the skin to the doctor or nurse.
- The skin under the breast and under the arm is very sensitive to radiation. These areas may become very red and tender. Mention this to your radiation team.

**Diet**
- Enough caloric and protein intake is a very important part of your therapy you maintain your weight and benefit most from your treatment.
- You may notice a lump in your throat, heartburn or trouble swallowing after 2-3 weeks of treatments. Mention this to your radiation team. This is an expected part of your treatment and will go away after your treatments are done.

**Vitamins**
You may take one multi-vitamin daily. Do not take anti-oxidants or megavitamins during your radiation therapy.

**Birth Control**
It is important to use birth control during treatments and for some time after treatments are complete.

Please remember, if you have any questions or concerns, please ask your radiation team or call us at (315) 464-5276