

Radiation Therapy to the Pelvis (GYN)

About 2 to 3 weeks after your first radiation treatment, you may notice skin changes of your stomach area or pelvis. 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. Do not sit in a tub. You may shower.
- Avoid all soaps, lotions, ointments, cosmetics, and perfumed powders on the treatment area. You may dust the area with Johnson's® Baby Powder or cornstarch.
- Do not use heating pads or ice bags on the treatment area.
- Keep the treated area out of the sun.
- 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.
- Keep buttocks and pelvic areas clean and dry.
- Avoid tight-fitting clothing around your stomach and pelvic area. For women, it is best not to wear girdles or pantyhose. Cotton underwear is the best choice.
- Your menstrual periods will stop as a result of treatments. This may cause symptoms of menopause (hot flashes and vaginal dryness).
- Do not douche.
- Loss of pubic hair may occur.

Diet

- **Do not** take a laxative.
- Drink plenty of liquids: 8 to 10 glasses of fluids per day, not including citrus juices.
- You will be placed on a low-residue diet unless your doctor advises against it. The nurse will help you with this.

- Diarrhea and urinary frequency and burning may occur later on in treatments and can be controlled by diet and medicines. Be sure to let your technologist or nurse know if this occurs.
- You may take one multi-vitamin daily. Do not take anti-oxidants or mega-vitamins during your radiation therapy.

Sexuality

- Radiation therapy can affect your sexual desire. If you experience a decrease in desire, this will go away after treatment.
- If it is comfortable for you and your doctor agrees, sexual relations can continue during your radiation therapy
- Vaginal dryness, itching, burning and narrowing of the vagina may occur. Speak to your doctor if symptoms occur.
- If necessary, use water based lubrication only.
- Your doctor may suggest a dilator (device to stretch the vaginal tissue) after your treatments are complete. This will prevent vaginal narrowing.
- It is important that you do not become pregnant during treatment and for some time after treatment completes.

Please remember, if you have any questions or concerns, please ask your radiation team or call us at (315) 464-5276. We will be happy to answer your questions.