

# HEAD AND NECK RADIATION INSTRUCTIONS

DO	DO NOT
<p><b>Skin Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wash the area being treated daily using a mild, fragrance-free soap, such as Dove®-Sensitive skin or Aveeno®. Be gentle on the treatment area and pat dry.</li> <li>If there is no skin breakdown, do apply a fragrance-free moisturizer twice daily to skin after radiation treatment.</li> <li>If there is skin breakdown, your radiation healthcare provider may prescribe a cream such as Silvadene® cream. In that case, wash and dry the skin twice daily and apply the cream prescribe by your healthcare provider after washing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Oral Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brush your teeth, gums, and tongue gently with a soft toothbrush and mild toothpaste such as Biotene® or Sensodyne® for example.</li> <li>Sip water or a flavored beverage to keep your mouth and throat moist.</li> <li>Your healthcare provider may suggest an oral or dry mouth rinse such as Biotene® to clear secretions. Please use as directed.</li> <li>It is recommended to rinse your mouth 6 to 8 times daily with a salt/baking soda solution: Mix 1 cup of warm temperature water, 1/4 teaspoon of baking soda, and 1/8 teaspoon of salt. Swish, gargle, and spit.</li> <li>See your dentist prior to starting radiation treatment as indicated.</li> </ul> <p><b>Pain Control</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your treatment may cause pain in the mouth, throat, skin or other areas. Make sure to tell your healthcare provider about your pain level. The goal is to minimize your pain to help you complete treatment.</li> <li>Your radiation healthcare provider may prescribe narcotic pain medications. These cause constipation. Please discuss with your provider and follow the suggested bowel regimen.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Skin Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid wearing clothing that rubs the neck or treatment area.</li> <li>Avoid exposing the treated skin to extreme heat or cold.</li> <li>Do not shave in the treatment area. If you must shave, use an electric razor.</li> <li>Avoid exposing area being treated to prolonged direct sunlight. If prolonged exposure is necessary, cover with clothing or use sunblock of at least SPF 50.</li> <li>Do not apply creams/lotions to the skin two hours prior to radiation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Oral Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid alcohol-containing mouth rinses.</li> <li>Do not use tobacco such as cigarettes, pipes, cigars, or chewing tobacco.</li> </ul> <p><b>Pain Control</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not change doses of pain medication (up or down) without speaking with your radiation healthcare provider.</li> <li>Avoid misplacing your pain medications or leaving them in an unsafe place. They are difficult to replace if lost or stolen.</li> </ul>



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## Diet

- Regardless of your current weight, excess weight loss during treatment slows healing afterwards.
- Get enough nutrition during your treatment. Eat a well-balanced diet that is high in calories and protein.
- As needed: mash, puree, or cut food into very small, soft pieces. Use a blender to make shakes or blend foods.
- Eat soft foods (such as macaroni, mashed potatoes, scrambled eggs, cheese, Greek yogurt, nut butters, bananas, avocados).
- Use protein powders and/or supplement formulas to get more calories and protein.
- Avoid coarse or crunchy foods (such as granola, potato chips, hard toast). Add gravy, broth, or milk to make foods wet or soft.
- Eat foods warm, NOT hot.
- Avoid acidic and spicy foods (such as citrus fruits, salsa, chili powder, hot peppers, and vinegar).
- Stay hydrated. You should try to drink 2 liters of fluids every day. Limit beverages containing caffeine. Avoid alcohol.
- Do not take vitamins, supplements or herbal remedies that have not been approved by your health care provider.
- If you experience any signs or symptoms from treatment, please discuss with your radiation oncology team for review of management options.

