

The Radiotherapy Department

Guidelines for using Mepilex[®] dressing



We recommend using Mepilex dressing when your skin has broken and is weeping due to the radiotherapy.

Mepilex absorbs any oozing from the wound but keeps your skin moist, which aids the healing process. Mepilex can be used in combination with the gels which may also have been recommended.

It may be helpful to share this leaflet with your family doctor, district or practice nurse if you see them to have your dressings changed.

Instructions for use

Remove the dressing before you shower or bath each day. Cleanse the area where you have been treated with radiotherapy with tepid water, using a fresh, clean flannel. Use a clean flannel each time to prevent infection.

Your skin may bleed a little after cleansing, this is normal.

Gently pat your skin dry and make sure the surrounding skin is dried thoroughly, to help the new dressing to stay in place. Apply a thin layer of sodium lauryl sulphate-free moisturiser to the unbroken skin.

Apply hydrogel liberally to broken areas of skin (see separate hydrogel information leaflet).

Remove the protective layer from the Mepilex dressing and apply the sticky side to cover the hydrogel.

For best results the Mepilex dressing should overlap dry surrounding skin by at least 2cm. If required it can be trimmed to size. You can help the Mepilex to stay in place with a bandage or as shown by your nurse or therapeutic radiographer.

When to change the dressing

We recommend you change the dressing

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If the hydrogel has dried out and the Mepilex dressing is clean, you can lift the dressing and apply a fresh layer of hydrogel. Apply hydrogel as often as required.

Wash your hands before and after changing your dressing, to prevent infection.

Signs to look out for

Infection

During your course of radiotherapy you must tell your radiotherapy nurse practitioner or therapeutic radiographer if you think your skin is becoming infected. When you have completed your radiotherapy you should tell your family doctor or district nurse. Signs of infection are:

- feverish, flu-like symptoms
- a red, hot, swollen area
- a smelly abnormal discharge.

However, it is not unusual for the area to produce a discharge on the dressing which can look slightly green and thick. If you are at all worried please do not hesitate to contact us.

Tel: **01865 235 472**

Precautions

Please tell your radiotherapy nurse or therapeutic radiographer if the dressing is irritating your skin.

Mepilex should be stored in dry conditions and be protected from direct sunlight.

Do not use if the inner package is damaged or if it is past the expiry date printed on the outer package.

How to contact us

If you have any queries during your course of radiotherapy please speak to the therapeutic radiographer treating you or the radiotherapy nurse practitioners.

Tel: **01865 235 472** during normal working hours

Outside of these hours, please phone Oxford triage assessment team on **01865 572 192**.

If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter, a document in Easy Read, another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473** or email **PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk**

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