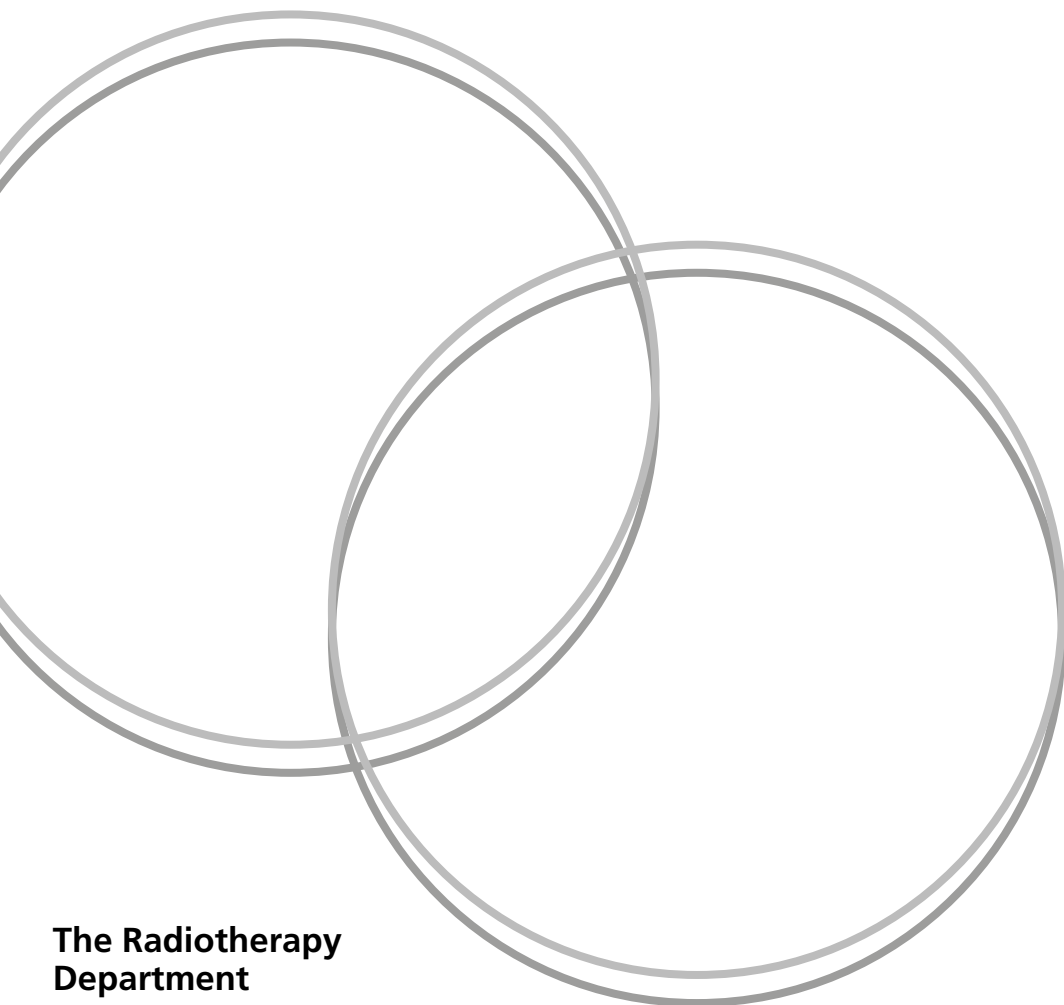




Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Guidelines for using PolyMem[®]

Information for patients



The Radiotherapy
Department

PolyMem® is a soft, absorbent dressing with moisturising and wound cleansing ingredients.

You may be given PolyMem® dressing because you have a moist area on your skin, due to the radiotherapy. The reaction on your skin is normal and the PolyMem® dressing will help provide the right conditions for your radiotherapy reaction to heal.

PolyMem® dressing will protect the delicate skin, absorb discharge from the skin, provide comfort, minimise pain, and reduce the risk of infection.

Instructions for use

- Wash your hands well, both before and after applying the PolyMem®, to prevent infection.
- Cleanse the area where you have had radiotherapy with lukewarm water and pat it dry with a clean towel.
- If necessary, cut the dressing to the required size and shape.
- Put the plain side of the dressing onto your skin. The printed side of the dressing should be on the outside.
- Secure the dressing as shown by your Nurse Practitioner or Therapeutic Radiographer.
- **Do not** use tape directly on your skin. You can use tape on the dressing as shown by your Nurse Practitioner or Therapeutic Radiographer.
- Moisturising creams are not required under the dressing. PolyMem® dressings contain ingredients that help to moisturise the skin.
- The PolyMem® dressing may be left in place for several days, depending on the amount of fluid oozing from the skin. Change the dressing when the fluid is visible through the upper side of the dressing.
- While you are wearing the PolyMem® dressing you won't need to clean the area of skin underneath, as there are wound cleansing ingredients within the dressing.
- You can keep the PolyMem® dressing in place when bathing, but must keep it dry. Change the dressing if it gets wet.
- When the skin is no longer moist and the broken areas have healed you can stop using the PolyMem® dressing. You can then return to using moisturising cream.

Signs to look out for

Infection

Signs of infection are:

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

During your course of radiotherapy treatment you must tell your **radiotherapy nurse practitioner** or Therapeutic Radiographer if you think your skin is becoming infected. When you have completed your treatment you should tell your family doctor or district nurse. 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 the Nurse Practitioners.

Tel: **01865 235 472**

Precautions

Please tell your Nurse practitioner or Therapeutic Radiographer if the dressing is irritating your skin.

PolyMem® 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 radiotherapy please speak to the therapeutic radiographer treating you or the Nurse Practitioners.

Tel: **01865 235 472**

during normal working hours

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

Further Information

Please speak to the department where you are being seen if you would like an interpreter. You will find their contact details on your appointment letter. Please also ask them if you would like this information leaflet in another format, such as:

- easy read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronically
- in another language.

We have tried to make this information meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They will be happy to help.

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Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
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