Skin Care During Treatment

Chemotherapy, radiation, and medications may cause changes to your child’s skin. Tell your healthcare provider about rashes, redness, open areas, or any other skin irritation.

Some of the common skin changes during treatment are:
- Dryness
- Increased sensitivity to sun
- Rashes or open areas which may be slow to heal
- Irritation in the area surrounding the anus and/or the vagina or penis
- Dry, chapped lips
- Redness or darkening of the skin
- Risk of skin infections

Managing Side Effects:
- Bathe daily with a gentle, scent-free soap
- Use a scent-free moisturizing lotion after bathing
  - Always check with your health care provider before using any sort of medicated cream, ointment or lotion
  - Do not use any lotions, creams, or ointments if your child is receiving radiation or total body irradiation
- Do not share any skin care products, including makeup
- Clean and cover any areas of broken skin
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Apply lip balm with SPF 15-30

Sun Protection:
Protection from the sun is especially important when receiving chemotherapy, radiation, after hematopoietic stem cell transplant or taking certain medications.

Sunscreen Application
- Apply “water resistant” sunscreen with SPF 30 or greater with both UVA and UVB protection 30 minutes before going outdoors
  - Hypoallergenic – may lessen the risk of developing a rash or an allergic reaction
  - Noncomedogenic – may be better for your skin if you have acne. Gels are often preferable
- Reapply sunscreen covering all exposed areas including head and ears, at least every 1-2 hours. Reapply after swimming, sweating, or after using a towel to dry off
- Sunscreen should be applied even on cloudy days or when around reflective surfaces such as snow, sand, and water
- Apply lip balm with SPF 15-30
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Protective Clothing
- Wear sunglasses and hats wide enough to cover face, neck, and ears while outside
- SPF clothing will provide extra protection

Planning for Outdoor Activities
- Limit time spent in the direct sun, especially between the hours of 10am and 4pm.
- If outside during these hours, try and find shady areas to avoid direct contact with the sun

Artificial Tanning
- Do not use tanning salons or tanning beds
- Chemicals found in self tanners dye the skin to create a tan. They are NOT sunscreens, unless the product specifically says it contains a SPF

Contact Us
- For patient care assistance, please call the following phone numbers:
  Jimmy Fund Clinic (617) 632-3270
  Business Hours 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday
- Page Operator (617) 632-3352
  Off hours: weekdays after 5 p.m., holidays, and weekends
  Page pediatric hematology/oncology fellow on call
- Life Threatening Emergencies dial 911