

# Skin Care Protocol for Breast External Radiation

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## Background

- Radiation induced skin reaction affects 85% of patient receiving radiation therapy
- No current standardized protocol for skin care during radiation therapy exist
- Limited research available on prevention and treatment of radiation induced skin reaction

## What is Current at WPH

The current skin care policy for external beam radiation instructs patients as follows

- A. Gently Was with warm water and mild soap (Dove unscented is recommended)
- B. Apply clear alcohol free, Aloe Vera gel to affected breast three times a day
- C. Apply cornstarch to inframmary fold to decrease friction
- D. Use non aluminum based deodorants
- E. Avoid other skin care products during course of Radiation Therapy

## Proposal for Changing Skin Care Policy

- Decrease patient anxiety by making minimal changes to usual skin care routine
- Assess patients skin weekly and adjust recommendations as needed
- Research the potential benefits of calendula cream during radiation therapy
- Continue use of corn starch to inframammary fold

## Evidence Shows

WPH study compared and evaluated axillary, and breast skin reaction during breast external beam radiation, while using aluminum based deodorant or aluminum free-deodorant

- With the use of aluminum free deodorants, 90% of patient had a skin reaction to the treated breasts and 30% had a skin reaction to the axilla
- With the use of aluminum based deodorants, 90% of patients had a skin reaction to the treated breasts, 10% had a skin reaction to the axilla

The study concluded that it was appropriate for changes to be made to the current WPH skin care protocol. An action plan was implemented that discontinued the recommendation of not using aluminum based deodorant during external beam radiation to the breast.