



Radiation to the Chest

When receiving radiation treatments, you may experience side effects, which your doctor will discuss with you. The side effects vary depending on your tumor and the technique used to treat it. Some side effects may go away over time.

Common Side Effects

- Fatigue
- Cough
- Heartburn
- Skin irritation
- Difficult or painful swallowing
- Shortness of breath
- Weight loss
- Thick secretions

Key Reminders

- Do not wash off marks
- Keep the area as dry as possible
- Use a gentle moisturizing soap, such as Dove or Caress, in the treatment area
- Eat soft foods
- Eat frequent, small meals or snacks between meals: Think “high calorie, high protein” foods
- Eat foods high in potassium
- Drink supplements such as Boost, Ensure, Carnation Instant Breakfast and Prosure to help maintain weight
- Drink at least 8 glasses of fluids a day to avoid dehydration
- Avoid foods and drinks that are hot, spicy, acidic or that contain alcohol

If you experience problems related to side effects, please notify your doctor, nurse or radiation therapist. You may need a prescription to help relieve some of your side effects.