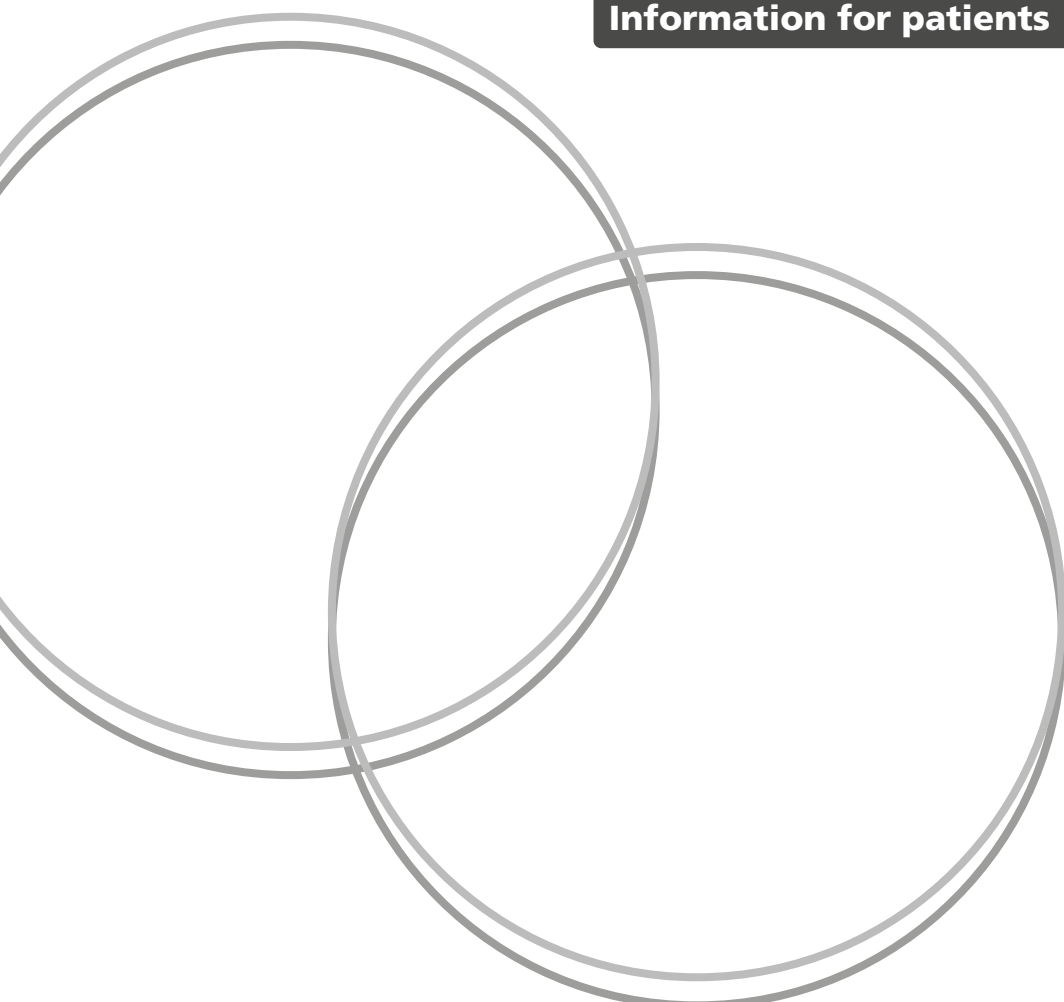




Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Radiotherapy: Guidelines for using Mepilex[®] dressing

Information for patients



The Radiotherapy Department

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.
- Wash your hands well, both before and after applying the dressing, to prevent infection.
- Cleanse the area where you have been treated with radiotherapy with Lukewarm water, using a fresh, clean flannel.
- Use a fresh 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 practitioner or Therapeutic Radiographer.

When to change the dressing

You should change your dressing as advised by your nurse or Therapeutic Radiographer.

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.

Oxford: **01865 235 472**

Swindon: **01865 220 680**

Milton Keynes: **01865 857 570**

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 radiotherapy please speak to the therapeutic radiographer treating you, or the radiotherapy nurse practitioners.

During normal working hours please call:

Oxford: **01865 235 472**

Swindon: **01865 220 680**

Milton Keynes: **01865 857 570**

Outside of hours please call:

The Oxford triage assessment team on: **01865 572 192.**

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

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

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Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
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