Skin care following high dose interventional fluoroscopy procedures

This leaflet outlines how high dose interventional fluoroscopy procedures can affect your skin and gives advice on how to take care of it. If you have any other queries please call the Radiology Department on 0118 322 8368

Interventional fluoroscopy procedures and your skin

Interventional fluoroscopy uses X-rays to guide small instruments through blood vessels or other pathways in the body via a small incision (cut). This means that an X-ray beam is directed at a relatively small patch of skin throughout the procedure.

For some treatments, exposure to X-rays may be longer, particularly in emergency situations where there may be unexpected complications. Prolonged exposure to X-rays can cause skin changes to the area of the body being treated.

What are the possible skin changes?

Up to ten days after treatment, you may notice your skin:

- Becoming more sensitive
- Looking pinker and sunburnt
- Looking dry, flaky and feeling sore
- Feeling itchy and inflamed
- About three weeks after treatment, you may also experience temporary hair loss in the affected are of the body.

What can I do to take care of my skin?

Washing

- Avoid washing with very hot water as this may irritate the skin more.
- Only use unperfumed soap, as your skin may become more sensitive to perfumes.
- When drying, pat (do not rub) the area dry with a clean towel – your skin can become fragile and more prone to flaking and peeling, so rubbing will make it worse.
- Avoid deodorants, antiperspirants and perfumes in the affected area, as this may cause further irritation.
- Do not use talc, as this may dry out the skin.
- If the skin becomes very dry, we recommend that you gently apply Aqueous (moisturising) cream to the affected area twice a day.

Swimming

- Avoid swimming in chlorinated water (commonly used in swimming pools) until your skin is back to normal.

Clothing

- Try wearing loose clothes and cotton underwear as these will feel more comfortable and will help reduce the risk of fabrics irritating or rubbing your skin.

Sunlight

- Avoid direct sunlight on the affected area.
- Do not sunbathe as your skin will be more likely to burn.

Your skin will remain sensitive to the effects of your interventional fluoroscopy treatment for several weeks. We recommend that you continue to use moisturising cream twice a day until 30 days after your treatment.

When to contact the Radiology Department?

The Radiology Department will contact you 30 days after your procedure. If you have any concerns in the meantime, please contact the Radiology Department on 0118 322 8368 or email rbft.radiologyadmin@nhs.net

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Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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