Your doctor recommends mantle field radiation therapy for lymphoma. This sheet discusses possible side effects and ways to reduce and manage them.

**Mantle Field**

*The mantle field includes the lymph nodes in the neck, armpit, above and below the collarbone, and middle of the chest.*

**Lymphatic System**

Changes in your diet can help these side effects. Eat soft foods that are easy to swallow such as custard, mashed potatoes, and gelatin. Also, eat food that is warm, not very hot or cold. Avoid spicy or hard foods. See your dentist to talk about caring for your mouth before treatments begin. If your mouth becomes sore, tell your health care provider.

**Hair loss.** After about two weeks, you will notice hair loss primarily at the back of the neck. This may or may not be permanent and depends on the dose of radiation you receive. Hair usually begins to grow back within three to six months after you complete radiation.

**Cough.** You may have a dry cough during treatment. You should tell your health care team if you feel shortness of breath. Smoking makes the cough worse.

**Nausea.** You may feel nausea during treatment. Let your health care team know if you have this symptom. Your doctor can prescribe drugs to help with nausea.

**Fatigue.** Feeling tired is common. Take good care of yourself while you are having treatments. Build rest periods into your day and eat a well-balanced diet. Mild exercise such as a daily walk can help. Do not exercise if it causes shortness of breath.

**Skin changes.** Side effects to the skin occur only in areas where the radiation enters and exits your body. If you are unsure where your treated areas are, ask your health care provider. After a week or two of treatments, your skin will start to become dry. It may darken, turn pink to red, itch, or feel tender. You should take care of your skin from the first day of radiation, before you notice these changes.

**How Can I Protect My Skin?**

- Wash skin gently with warm water. Do not scrub. Use your hand rather than a washcloth and pat dry with a soft towel.
- Use a mild soap that is free of perfumes or deodorants.

**Short Term Side Effects**

**Mouth.** One week after starting treatment, you may notice some changes in your mouth. Food may not taste the same. Normal taste should return in about two months. Your saliva may get dry and thick, which makes it hard to swallow.

- Drink about eight glasses of fluid each day to keep your mouth moist.
- Use lip balm to prevent chapping.
- Do not use alcohol-based mouthwash products, which dry your mouth. Instead, rinse your mouth at least four times a day with a mixture of ½ teaspoon baking soda and ½ teaspoon salt in four cups of warm water.

Your mouth may remain dry for up to three months after your therapy ends. People over the age of 40 tend to take longer to return to a normal amount of saliva.
• Wear loose-fitting cotton clothes. Do not wear tight-fitting clothes that can cause friction.
• Do not use adhesive products such as bandages or tape in the treated area.
• Avoid extreme heat or cold on the skin. Do not use heating pads, ice packs, or hot water bottles on the skin.
• Avoid exposing treated skin to the sun; it will be more sensitive. Use a PABA-free sunscreen with at least SPF 30 when outdoors, wear a wide-brimmed hat, and avoid tanning beds.
• Use only an electric razor if you shave within the treated area.

What Can I Do?
• Apply a moisturizing cream, lotion, gel, or oil to radiated skin. Choose products for sensitive skin, and avoid products with perfume or deodorant.
• If a product stings, stop using it.
• If your skin becomes tender or itchy, try using an over-the-counter, one-percent hydrocortisone cream. If necessary, your health care provider may prescribe a steroid cream.

Long-Term Side Effects
Thyroid. The most common long-term side effect is a change in the function of the thyroid gland. During follow-up visits, a health care provider will take a blood sample to check for thyroid function problems. If thyroid problems are found, you may need to take a thyroid pill daily.
Tingling. About 10 percent of patients have tingling that extends down their arms and legs when they flex their neck. This is known as Lhermittes Syndrome. It resolves on its own.
Shingles. Herpes zoster can occur within one to two years after you finish treatment. If you develop this chicken pox-like rash, call your health care provider right away. This outbreak is often limited to one area of the body and can be controlled with medicine.
Symptoms may go on after your last treatment. If you have any problems, talk to your health care provider about your concerns.