Some chemotherapy drugs can cause changes to your skin or nails. These changes can include the following:

- Itching, dryness, redness, rashes, and peeling
- Acne-like rash, if you take an epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) medication
- Increased sun sensitivity
- Darkened, yellowed, brittle, and cracked nails
- Darkened veins in the area of the IV

Let your doctor or nurse know if you experience any of these symptoms.

How to Care for Your Skin

Here are some suggestions to help relieve skin problems caused by chemotherapy.

**Itching, dryness, redness, rashes, and peeling**

- Drink plenty of water.
- Avoid long, hot showers. Use lukewarm water and mild soap. Gently pat skin dry with a soft towel.
- Limit tub baths to less than 30 minutes.
- Use a hypoallergenic moisturizing lotion over your entire body. Apply while skin is damp from bath or shower, and reapply frequently throughout the day.
- Choose body-care and cleaning products (soap, shampoo, lotion, and laundry detergent) that are free of dye, alcohol, and perfume.
- Avoid perfumes, colognes, and aftershaves.
- Wear loose-fitting clothing.
- Choose clothes and bed sheets made of soft cotton.

**Sun sensitivity**

- Avoid direct sunlight. Stay in the shade as much as possible when outdoors.
- Wear protective clothing, including long pants or skirts, long-sleeved shirts, and a wide-brimmed hat.
- Do not use a tanning bed.
- Use SPF 30 or higher sunscreen. Remember to apply it to the back of the neck, the tops of feet and ears, and the top of your head if you have no hair.
- Use SPF 15 or greater lip balm.

**Dark, yellowed, brittle, or cracked nails**

- Wear protective gloves when washing dishes, gardening, or doing housework.
- Keep fingernails and toenails clean and trimmed.
- You may use products that strengthen nails as long as they do not cause irritation.
- Avoid biting nails.
- Avoid artificial nails.
- Do not wear tight-fitting socks and shoes.
- Moisturize your hands and feet often with a hypoallergenic lotion or cream.
- Tell your health care providers if you have painful, red areas on your fingers or toes. It may be a sign of infection.

**Acne-like rash**

- Don’t use acne skin care products; they can make the rash worse.
- Keep your face clean. Your doctor may recommend medicated creams or soaps.
- Use hypoallergenic lotions. Avoid creams with mineral oil, petrolatum, or lanolin.
- Use SPF 30 or higher sunscreen.
- If you wear makeup, be sure it is hypoallergenic.
- Use a mild shampoo if the rash occurs on the scalp.
- Avoid shaving areas where the rash occurs.