

SKIN DAMAGE LINKED TO TREATMENT AGAINST EGFR

■ Important information for you

You are receiving a treatment targeted at the epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR). This treatment has undesirable but temporary effects on the skin, making it fragile.

The changes to your skin usually take place in three stages. Your oncologist will offer you:

- ▶ Appropriate treatment
- ▶ Consultation with a dermatologist if need be.

Stage 1: Spots appear

Very frequently, acne-like spots erupt in the very first weeks of treatment, most often on the face or trunk, causing discomfort and itching.

Do not take any medication for acne; it will be useless, and may even be harmful.

Stage 2: The skin dries out

Your skin dries and may also peel and an eczema-like redness appears.

Stage 3: Body hair and eyelashes change. Your extremities are affected

Your eyelashes and body hair grow longer. Sometimes a soft down appears on your face. Your fingers and the soles of your feet become chapped and cracked. The skin surrounding your nails is red and painful.

These effects come later and are rarer. They disappear once the treatment is terminated.

This kind of treatment may also provoke hyperkeratosis, which is a thickening of the calluses on your feet. Consultation with a chiropodist can be arranged by your care team either before or during treatment.



ALSO AVAILABLE

Consultations concerning body image and make-up workshops can be arranged at the HUG.

+ INFO

The sun's rays include UVA and UVB. The figure appearing on the tube of cream – the SPF or sun protection factor – only indicates the protection provided against UVB. For total sun protection, choose a cream marked 'broad spectrum' or indicating UVA + UVB. Quality products at low prices do exist. An SPF of 30 stops 97% of the UVB rays; for total protection go for SPF 50.

Some advice

- ▶ Take care of your skin each day, lavishing moisturizers on it from the start of your treatment. Your care team will advise you how to choose the most suitable creams.
- ▶ Use PH-neutral soap and shower gel.
- ▶ Avoid all irritating products containing alcohol or perfumed cosmetics.
- ▶ Ask your care team for advice about masking facial spots with tinted creams.
- ▶ Clean your nails and the surrounding skin daily and apply a greasy ointment to the cuticles.
- ▶ Take regular care of your hands and feet: cut your nails, apply plenty of moisturizer, remove calluses.
- ▶ Wear loose-fitting clothes and shoes to prevent the skin being rubbed.
- ▶ Avoid direct exposure to the sun and protect yourself from the wind which can further dry your skin.
- ▶ Before going out in sunny weather or bright light, protect your skin with a high-SPF sun cream (at least 30). Low-cost high-quality products do exist in the supermarkets. Choose them according to what part you need to cover (face or body). Go for a formula you like, because you will have to re-apply it very often.
- ▶ If necessary, apply cold compresses during treatment to lessen the inflammation.

This card was translated by



Hôpitaux
Universitaires
Genève