Radiation Induced Skin Disorders

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Abstract

Skin disorders as a result of radiotherapy can cause major inconvenience to cancer patients. Radiotherapy of internal malignancies will lead to different degrees of damage to the surrounding skin. Skin disorders or lesions induced by radiotherapy can be treated effectively by Elasto-Gel™, because glycerine seems to have a modulating effect on the accompanying inflammation reactivity.

Radiotherapy induced skin lesions can be divided in several grades:

1. Mild post-radiation erythema (2-3 days)
2. Edema (2-3 weeks)
3. Epidermal blister formation and skin exfoliation (4-6 weeks)
4. Chronic radiodermatitis (month-years)

Mild erythema, edema, epidermal blister formation and skin exfoliation are all signs of acute inflammation of the skin and in fact comparable sunburn disorders.

Chronic radiodermatitis is caused by radiation induced changes to the tissue vascularization. Blood flow disorders give rise to skin defects a month to years after initial radiotherapy and are comparable to ulcus cruris like disorders. Small defects can deteriorate by bacterial infection and lead to massive skin destruction.

The treatment of acute radiation induced skin disorders is directed to reduction of the inflammatory reactivity. Elasto-Gel™ has shown to reduce the inflammation reaction nearly instantaneously. Diminishing of pain, a cooling effect, reduction of erythema and edema and a less outspoken pigmentation of the skin can be observed. Patients appreciate their radiotherapy induced skin disorders to be covered by Elasto-Gel™, which will give less discomfort than pharmaceuticals and multiple bandage changes.

Chronic radiotherapy induced skin defects can be kept clean by Elasto-Gel™. Because of their slow healing capacity, the more or less toxic anti-microbial creams must be avoided. Elasto-Gel™ keeps wound crusts more plasticized and the condition of the skin will improve.

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