

Skin Care During and After Radiation Treatment: Making a Water-Based Dressing

What is a water-based dressing?

A water-based dressing is a bandage with cream that covers your red or blistered skin. It can help to heal your skin.

What kind of cream should I use for the dressing?

You can use either Glaxal Base® or CeraVe® cream. They are both mild, water-based, and have no perfume (scent) added.

How often should I change my dressing?

You should change your dressing 1 or 2 times each day.

If you need to go in for radiation treatment, remove the dressing and clean your skin before your appointment. You can apply a new dressing when you get home.



What supplies will I need?

1



Homemade saltwater mix (saline)

- Add 1 teaspoon salt to 2 cups water and boil
- Cool to room temperature before using
- Homemade saline will last 2 days (48 hours) in the fridge

2



Non-sterile gauze and a **clean** popsicle stick, spatula, or your hands to spread the cream

3



A clean burn net stocking (mesh) or tank top

4



Glaxal Base® or CeraVe® cream

Where can I buy my supplies?

You can buy your supplies at any pharmacy.

How do I make a water-based dressing?

1. Wash your hands well.
2. Clean a table or counter and put your supplies down.
3. Gently clean the red or blistered skin. You can use saline, or take a warm shower.

If you use the saline (saltwater):

- Wet a clean wash cloth with the cooled saline
- Lightly pat your skin clean. If there is cream on your skin, make sure you remove all of it until your skin doesn't feel slimy
- Clean under any skin folds
- Let your skin air dry for 1 minute. Do not rub the area dry with a towel.

If you take a warm shower:

- Use a mild soap without a scent
- Lightly pat your skin clean. If there is cream on your skin, make sure you remove all of it until your skin doesn't feel slimy
- Clean under any skin folds
- When you exit the shower, let your skin air dry or lightly pat your skin dry with a towel. Do not rub the skin.

4. Use a **clean** popsicle stick, spatula, or hands to put a thick layer of cream on the affected skin. Make sure you also apply cream to any skin folds in the area. The cream needs to be thick enough so you can't see the skin under it.
5. Use the gauze to cover the area well. If there are folds of skin in the area of your dressing, apply the gauze to these areas first. Add more layers of gauze — these will stick together to make a solid dressing.
6. Put on a burn net stocking or a tank top. This will help hold the gauze to your skin and keep it in place. You can reuse the burn net stocking if it is washed.



What should I do if my skin gets worse?

If your blisters get worse, smell bad, or the dressing is hard to remove from your skin, contact your healthcare team. You can get help during treatments and after treatments are done.



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