



The Shrewsbury and
Telford Hospital
NHS Trust

Patient Information

Salt Bathing at Home

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This leaflet is designed to give you information about salt bathing during and following radiotherapy

The effects of radiotherapy treatment

Radiotherapy treatment can cause soreness of the skin; this can be more common in patients having pelvis radiotherapy. A salt bath is recommended to help ease irritation to perineal or bottom area (area between the legs, including the anus, vagina or scrotum).

What is a salt bath?

A salt bath is a warm soothing soak to your perineal or bottom area. The soak is made up of baking soda (sodium bicarbonate) or salt. The aim of salt bathing is to cleanse the area, reducing the chance of infection, soothing the skin and increasing blood circulation to the area to aid healing.

How often should I have a salt bath?

You can salt bath as much or as little as you feel is necessary. Generally we recommend doing this 3-4 times per day. Some people will have a salt bath after each bowel motion if the pelvic area is very sore.

How do I take a salt bath?

There are two ways that you can take a salt bath.

You may use:

1. A plastic bowel that fits into the toilet- these will be given to you by the radiographers if needed.
2. Your bathtub at home.

How to use a **toilet salt bath**

1. Lift the toilet seat and put the plastic bath in the toilet bowl
2. Fill the salt bath 2/3 full with warm water. Test the water using your wrist. If the water feels too warm on your wrist, it is too hot to sit in.
3. Add 1 tablespoon of baking soda or 1-2 teaspoons of salt to the water. Swirl the water until the baking soda or salt dissolves.
4. Carefully sit down into the plastic bath and soak your bottom area for 10-15 minutes.
5. When finished, dry your bottom by patting the area gently with a clean soft towel. You can also lie down and let the affected area air dry. After your skin is dry, wear loose cotton underwear.
6. Clean the toilet bath after each use.
7. Use fresh water and salt/ baking soda each time you use it.

How to take a salt bath in the bath tub

1. Fill the bath about 13cm (5 inches) deep with water. Test the water using your wrist. If the water feels too warm on your wrist, it is too hot to bath in.
2. Add ½ cup of sodium or salt to the bath water. Swirl the water until the baking soda or salt dissolves.
3. Sit in the bath and soak the area for 10-15 minutes
4. When finished, dry your bottom by patting the area gently with a clean soft towel. You can also lie down and let the affected area air dry. After your skin is dry, wear loose cotton underwear.
5. Clean the bath after each use.
6. Use fresh water and salt/ baking soda each time you soak.

We are a Dementia Friendly Department , please contact us directly on our answerphone 01743 261179 if you require additional help



Useful contacts

- Gynae Nurse Specialists - 01743 261000 ext. 1076
- Colorectal Nurse Specialist - 01743 261000 ext. 1144
- Therapeutic Radiographers - 01743 261179

For more information please contact;

- Royal Shrewsbury Hospital; 0800 783 0057 or 01743 2616 91
- Princess Royal Hospital; 01952 282888
- Hamar Help and Support Centre – counselling and supportive therapies.
- Psychosexual Therapist - 01743 261035

Other useful information

- Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital Website
www.sath.nhs.uk/cancer
- Macmillan Cancer Support – improves the lives of people affected by cancer. They provide practical, medical, emotional and financial support and push for better cancer care.
Tel 0845 6016161
www.macmillan.org.uk
- NHS website is for patients with questions about diagnosis and treatment of common conditions
www.nhs.uk
- Patient UK provides leaflets on health and disease translated into 11 other languages as well as links to national support and self-help groups and a directory of UK health websites.
www.patient.co.uk

