Caring for Skin, Hair and Nails on EGFR Inhibitors

Epidermal growth factor receptor inhibitors (EGFRIs) are a type of “targeted therapy” that blocks cell processes that cancer cells need to survive. The most common EGFRIs are:
- Afatinib (Gilotrif)
- Lapatinib (Tykerb)
- Erlotinib (Tarceva)
- Osimertinib (Tagrisso)
- Cetuximab (Erbitux)
- Panitumumab (Vectibix)
- Gefitinib (Iressa)

What side effects can occur with EGFRIs?
Unfortunately, like other cancer drugs, EGFRIs have side effects. The most common body part affected by these drugs is the skin. These side effects are often mild or moderate, but on occasion they can be severe. When side effects are severe, your doctor may need to stop treatment for a short time or permanently.

Tell your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist as soon as you have any skin, hair, or nail problems.

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<th>What to look for:</th>
<th>What to do:</th>
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| **Acne like rash** | • Avoid being in the sun and use a sunscreen with SPF 30, or higher.  
| An acne-like rash often begins 1 to 2 weeks after starting the drug. It may continue for several weeks then slowly get better.  
| It most often occurs on the face, neck, chest, and back. The rash may cause discomfort or itching.  | • Your doctor may prescribe special creams to put on red, inflamed areas, such as triamcinolone 0.1% cream to applied twice daily.  
| | • Do not use acne drugs or creams on the rash, as these may make it worse.  
| | • Your doctor may prescribe an antibiotic (doxycycline) to prevent or treat the rash. Taking doxycycline 100 mg twice daily has been shown to reduce severity of rash.  |
### Dry or itchy skin
After a few months, you may notice your skin looks dry and scaly on your arms, legs, or other parts of your body. The dryness may be so severe that the skin on your fingertips and heels cracks.

- Moisturize many times daily with over-the-counter ointments or creams, such as Eucerin®, Aquaphor®, or AmLactin®.
- For cracks on the fingertips, use creams containing zinc oxide, such as Desitin®.
- Drink plenty of fluids.

### Nail Changes
Painful swelling and redness around the fingernails/toenails, may occur 4-8 weeks after the start of treatment.

- Soak fingers or toes in a solution of white vinegar mixed with equal amount of tap water. Mix 1 cup of vinegar and 2 cups of water and soak for 10-15 minutes, 2 times a day.
- Keep fingers and toes well moisturized with petroleum jelly.

### Hair Changes
Your hair may change. Sometimes you can lose patches of hair, or your hair may thin. You may also notice hair growth on your face. Eyelashes and eyebrows may grow very long.

- Use an electric razor to remove any new or increased hair growth. Avoid using a straight razor, waxing, or chemicals.
- If long, curling eyelashes become bothersome and affect your vision, you may need to trim your eyelashes.

### Diarrhea
Diarrhea is most likely to occur in the first 4 weeks. It can cause discomfort, fatigue, and dehydration.

- Drink plenty of fluids (8, 8oz cups per day).
- Eliminate greasy, spicy, or fried foods you’re your diet.
- Take Imodium 4 mg, followed by 2 mg after each loose stool.