

*If you have any questions or concerns, ask your physician or nurse.*

## Use and Care of Your Vaginal Dilator

Radiation therapy may cause scar tissue to form in your vagina. Scar tissue is less elastic (flexible) than normal tissue. As a result, you may have discomfort during vaginal exams and sexual intercourse. You can prevent scar tissue from forming by using a vaginal dilator (a smooth plastic rod) and/or by having regular sexual intercourse.

### When to start using the vaginal dilator

\_\_\_\_\_ weeks after your radiation therapy ends, start using the dilator and/or having intercourse at least 3 times a week. If you cannot have intercourse or prefer not to, use the vaginal dilator.

You may have some spotting or bleeding from the dilator or intercourse the 1st few times. You may also have some discomfort. If you have discomfort with intercourse, you and your partner may need to stop and try again later. Using a water-based lubricant such as K-Y™ Jelly or Astroglide® can ease discomfort during intercourse.

### How to use the vaginal dilator

1. Wash your hands and the dilator with soap and warm water before each use.
2. Check the dilator to make sure it is smooth. Do not use the dilator if you find any rough spots.
3. Coat the dilator with a water-based lubricant, such as K-Y Jelly or Astroglide. Do not use Vaseline®, baby oil or other oil-based lubricants. These products can irritate your vaginal walls.
4. Lie on your back with your knees bent and legs apart.
5. Insert the rounded end of the dilator into your vagina as far as it will go without causing pain or discomfort.
6. Close your knees and slowly straighten your legs.
7. Keep the dilator in your vagina for about 10 minutes.
8. Bend your knees, open your legs and gently remove the dilator.
9. Gently cleanse the skin around the vaginal opening.
10. Wash your hands and the dilator with soap and warm water after each use.