**How to apply 5% menthol cream for treatment of chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy.**

The cream should be applied from the tips of the toe right up to above the knee and from the tips of the fingers to above the elbow in all four limbs. In certain circumstances only the feet or the hands may be affected and in such cases you can apply to just the affected limbs.

It is important that the cream is also applied to below the hairline which we call the cervical spine and to the small of the back also known as the sacral area. The cream should be applied at least twice daily, usually in the morning and evening and it will take about 25 minutes to dry in.

In patients with troublesome neuropathy in their hands, they can leave a tub by the sink and reapply during the day after washing their hands, particularly in the situation where they feel the effect wears off after a few hours.

If in general the effect of the menthol cream wears off after a time, it can be reapplied ie used more often than twice daily.

Some patients feel a benefit within the first week of using the cream but with others it can take 4-6 weeks and unless there is a problem using it, we would generally recommend a trial period of 6 weeks. If there is benefit from the cream and the neuropathy is feeling better it is usually sensible to use the cream for a 3 month period before a trial of coming off it, as neuropathy can take many months to resolve.

We will either give you a prescription for hospital pharmacy of 5% menthol in aqueous cream or ask you GP to prescribe this.