

MOUTH SORES

Managing Chemotherapy Side Effects.

Grading

Grade 0 - No sores

Grade 1 - Redness

Grade 2 - Oral ulcers can take solid food

Grade 3 - Oral ulcers, liquid intake only

Grade 4 - Oral intake impossible.

provide relief of discomfort, and prevent or treat infection until recovery.

How are mouth sores treated.



What causes mouth sores ?

Mouth sores are a common side effect of radiation and certain chemotherapy drugs. Chemotherapy and radiation kill rapidly dividing cells, a hallmark characteristic of some cancers. The GI tract, including the mouth and the throat, is made up of cells that divide rapidly. For this reason, the GI tract is particularly susceptible to damage by chemotherapy and radiation treatment. This is called mucositis. Mucositis is a self-limiting condition. The goal is to decrease the severity and duration of mucositis and to

Things You Can Do To Manage Oral Problems:

Keep mouth and lips moist:

- Rinse mouth with water frequently (every 2 hrs while awake & when awake during the night). May add salt or baking soda (1/2 to 1 teaspoon in 8 ounces of water).
- Use saliva substitute (commercially available) if needed.
- Apply lip moisturizer often (i.e. chap stick).
- Keep mouth & teeth clean. Use soft-bristle toothbrush (can soften even more by placing brush in very warm water) or cotton swabs to clean teeth after each meal and at bedtime.
- Clean dentures and/or bridge after eating.
- Leave out dentures if experiencing any discomfort.
- Floss gently with unwaxed floss (if platelet count adequate).

Avoid:

- Mouthwash containing alcohol.

Treat the discomfort/pain:

- Use topical/ local agents such as Dologel apply

What treatments are likely to cause mouth sores ?

Most chemotherapy drugs can cause mucositis, but this side effect is more frequent with some treatments.

Furthermore, while mouth sores can occur with any treatment for cancer, mucositis is more severe if you are treated with the following:

- Bone marrow transplants
- Radiation for head and neck cancer
- Combined chemotherapy and radiation therapy
- Frequent dosing schedules, such as weekly chemotherapy

The technique used to administer radiation may also impact the severity and duration of mouth sores. The following radiation techniques produce less severe side effects:

- Hyperfractionated radiation involves lower doses given more frequently, resulting in less severe side effects.
- Intensity-modulated radiation therapy (IMRT) spares normal tissues, reducing mouth sores, while still delivering the full radiation dose or even an increased dose to the cancer.



Oral care: Good oral care, defined as frequently rinsing the mouth with saline and brushing teeth 2-3 times per day, may help prevent mouth sores.

Mouthwashes: Salt and soda mouthwash has been shown to relieve mouth sores as well as medicated mouth washes, and is less expensive

Cryotherapy (ice chips): Symptomatic relief from mouth pain can be achieved by sucking ice chips when the chemotherapy drug is most concentrated in the body.

Drugs That May Be Prescribed by Your Doctor:

To treat or prevent infection the following may be used:

Antifungals: Such as nystatin, clotrimazole, fluconazole

Antibacterials: Mouthwash antiseptic, rinses are the basis of the oral decontamination regimen.

Chlorhexidine gluconate (Hexidine®, Chlorhex®).

Antivirals: Such as acyclovir (Acivir or Zovirax®).

When to Contact Your Doctor:

Temperature greater than 100.5 F (38 C).

Sores or ulcers in mouth or on lips that interfere with eating, drinking or sleeping.

Pain or any sign of infection (i.e tongue heavily coated).

Contact Details:

Dr. Adwaita A Gore.

Consultant Medical and Paediatric Oncologist, Hemato Oncologist and Bone Marrow Transplant Physician.

Dr Gores Clinic

201 Glamcent Premises, Opposite OLPS Church,
Central Avenue Road. Chembur (E) Mumbai 400071.

For appointments +91-9619810041.

Prince Aly Khan Hospital: 022-23777930.

Zen Multi Specialty Hospital: 022-25265736.

Email: adygore@gmail.com



DR GORE'S CLINIC