

Mucositis

What is mucositis?

Mucositis is sores or swelling inside the mouth. This is a common side effect of chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and bone marrow transplant.

It is important to eat well during cancer treatment and have good oral hygiene to help prevent mouth sores.

What should I do if I have mucositis?

- Ask your health care provider about medicine you can apply directly to the sores to ease the pain.
- Drink at least 8 to 10 cups of liquid each day.
- Brush your teeth three times a day with a soft toothbrush. If the toothbrush is too hard on your gums, try using swabs or gauze.
- Rinse your mouth with a salt water solution (see below) four times a day.
 - Salt Water Solution
 - 1 cup warm water
 - 1/8 teaspoon salt
 - 1/8 teaspoon baking sodaSwish and spit small amounts and then rinse your mouth with plain water.

How is mucositis treated?

Your health care team can help decide the best treatment, which may include some of these:

- Pain medicine
- Antifungal medicine
- Changes in your chemotherapy or radiation treatment

IF YOU FEEL SICK, TAKE YOUR TEMPERATURE. CALL YOUR DOCTOR OR NURSE IF YOU HAVE A TEMPERATURE OVER 100.3°F.

Helpful Suggestions

- Eat foods cold or at room temperature.
- Eat soft foods such as ice cream, eggs, custard, mashed potatoes, bananas, rice, and pasta.
- Eat well-cooked protein such as chicken.
- Use fluids to soften hard foods.
- Use a mouth moisturizer such as Biotene®, which is available at many pharmacies.
- Use lip balm.
- Avoid things that can irritate the mouth such as alcoholic beverages, spicy or acidic foods, tobacco products, and mouthwashes.
- Carry a water bottle with you. Drinking plenty of water helps keep the mouth moist.

If you are neutropenic and at risk of infection, make sure to ask your doctor or nurse about the foods that are best for you. Registered dietitians in the Linda B. and Robert B. Wiggins Wellness and Integrative Health Center can also help you make a diet plan. Call 801-587-4585 to make an appointment or for more information.

When should I call my doctor or nurse?

Call if any of the following things happen:

- If you have difficulty breathing.
- Your mouth does not heal or gets worse.
- You have white patches on your lips, gums, or tongue.
- You have a fever over 100.3°F

Doctor's Number: _____