









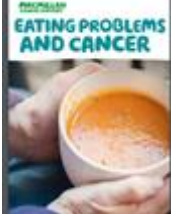



Head and Neck Radiotherapy Side Effects

The following pack contains information and medicines that will help support you, while you are having your radiotherapy treatment. Most people have very little or no side effects for the first week of treatment. As treatment progresses side effects can build up. You will be seen once a week by the review team and regularly by the dietitians and speech and language therapist, who will help support you during your treatment.

Treatment Side effects	Medicine/ Support	Advice
Skin reaction in treatment area		<p>Wash with soap and water and gently pat the area dry using a soft towel.</p> <p>Apply Flaminal RT three times a day to the head and neck area.</p> <p>Gentlemen: You may use an electric razor gently.</p> <p>Protect your skin from the sun or cold winds. Wear loose clothing around the treatment area. Avoid products on your skin that contain alcohol, such as aftershaves, perfumes, and hair dyes</p>
Fatigue (tiredness)		<p>As your treatment progresses you may feel more tired. This is normal. Keeping as hydrated as possible by drinking water.</p> <p>Listen to how tired your body feels and rest when required. You do not need to give up gentle exercise.</p> <p>The Macmillan Coping with Fatigue booklet contains good practical advice to help you manage you fatigue.</p>
Sore mouth		<p>When you start radiotherapy it is important to keep your mouth clean.</p> <p>If you are not experiencing any pain you should use Tellodont tablets.</p> <p>Dissolve one tablet in half a tumbler of warm water morning and night and after each meal. This will help keep your mouth clean.</p>

	 <p>Difflam™ Oral Rinse Benzylamine hydrochloride</p> <p>For relief of pain and inflammation in the throat and mouth Tobaccoed or gargled</p> <p>300 ml Solution</p>	<p>You will be given a prescription for Difflam mouthwash on your 1st day of treatment. Take this to your preferred pharmacy. Use this if your mouth gets sore.</p> <p>If the Difflam stings try diluting it with equal parts water.</p>
	 <p>ALLIANCE gelclair Concentrated Oral Rinse Sol. THREE SACHETS PACK 3 x 15 ml sachets</p>	<p>Gelclair can provide some localised relief if your mouth becomes sore.</p> <p>Mix one sachet with 40mls of water and swill around you mouth. You should do this three times per day, 40 minutes before you eat.</p> <p>If you find the Gelclair helpful, please let the radiographers know and they will be able to give you more.</p>
	 <p>NON WOVEN SWABS STERILE</p>	<p>Gauze can be soaked in warm water and be used to clean the teeth and inside of the mouth if it becomes too painful to use a toothbrush.</p>
<p>Dry mouth</p>	 <p>Oralieve Oralieve Soothing Mouth Spray</p>	<p>Your salivary glands may be affected with the radiotherapy. This can cause a dry mouth.</p> <p>You may need to drink more fluids with meals to help you chew and swallow, or use artificial saliva products if necessary.</p> <p>We have provided you with Oralieve dry mouth relief spray for you to try, this can provide immediate and lasting relief for a dry mouth.</p>
<p>Saliva changes</p>		<p>The radiotherapy can cause the saliva to become thicker</p> <p>Sodium Bicarbonate mouthwash Mix 1 teaspoon of sodium bicarbonate per pint of cooled boiled water.</p> <p>This may help to loosen the saliva in your mouth making it easier to spit out. If there is thicker saliva in your throat then a nebuliser or steam inhalation can help loosen it to cough up.</p>

		<p>We have provided MouthEze for you to try. This can be used to moisten the lips and mouth with water, clean a coated tongue. Remove sticky or stringy secretions saliva.</p>
		<p>Use the Atomiser / Spray bottle to spray warm water directly to an affected area. Applying warm water directly can help thin mucus secretions, and relieve symptoms of xerostomia (dry mouth).</p> <p>The Atomiser/ Spray bottle can also be used to apply Difflam (or diluted Difflam) directly on to a sore area of the mouth.</p>
<p>Difficulty in swallowing</p>		<p>Pain and inflammation can make food hard to swallow after radiotherapy. A softer moist diet and sipping water regularly while eating may make it easier for you to swallow.</p> <p>Taking regular pain medicine 30 minutes before eating can help. Your muscles will be stiff. Initially you need to think of eating as a swallowing exercise.</p>
<p>Loss or change in appetite/ taste</p>		<p>Radiotherapy can affect the sense of taste; lack of saliva can also affect the taste buds. Try to eat little and often, and sip water regularly.</p> <p>Some people may require a feeding tube (PEG) or require extra supplements to help maintain their weight while on treatment.</p> <p>The dietitians will see you throughout the treatment, they will give you some supplements to try, please let them know which flavours you like.</p> <p>The Macmillan building up diet and eating problems with cancer booklets are helpful for recipe ideas to help maximise oral dietary intake.</p>
<p>Hoarse voice</p>		<p>For most people, the voice gets worse during radiotherapy.</p> <p>Avoid smoking, drinking alcohol, salty, crunchy and spicy foods. Drink plenty of water.</p> <p>You will be seen by the Speech and Language therapists during treatment, who can advise how to look after your voice.</p>

		If your voice does not improve once your radiotherapy finishes, they can provide more specific therapy to help with this.
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