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The supportive oral measures preceding radiation therapy in patients diagnosed with nasopharyngeal carcinoma

Narges Mirjalili

Arad Dental Polyclinics, Iran

We all know that one of the main causes of death worldwide is head and neck cancer. As the incidence of cancer patients are increasing, dentists have a higher chance of visiting such patients at their offices. Radiation to the head and neck region, especially in nasopharyngeal carcinoma patients, has serious adverse effects on oral and dental health. Despite advanced radiation methods, such as intensity modulated radiation therapy, IMRT and the use of protective drugs, such as Amifostine, the burden of radiation-related consequences in the patients with head and neck carcinomas is yet significant. There are some simple measures that, if be taken at the proper time, can reduce the negative effects of ionizing radiation on the oral hard and soft tissues, particularly salivary glands and teeth. The following steps, with known mechanisms, will be beneficial to the patients and will enhance their quality of life during and after radiation therapy period. 1) Elimination of all the sources of oral infections 2) In-office fluoride 3) Use of neutral fluoride and home-made Xylitol mouth wash 4) Hydration 5) Frequent stimulation of salivary glands by mechanical and chemical methods. These five simple and non-expensive steps not only soothe the severity of immediate radiation-induced consequences, such as mucositis, but also reduce the magnitude of post-radiation effects, such as dry mouth and apple-core tooth decays.

Biography

Narges Mirjalili has completed her Masters in Oral Medicine from Tehran University of Medical Sciences and her Doctorate degree in Dentistry from Shahid Sadoughi University. She is the Management Associate of Arad Dental Polyclinic and also practices as an oral medicine specialist there. She was an Assistant Professor at Shahid Sadoughi University, department of oral biomedical sciences. She has published papers in reputed journals and a book on plasmacytoid masses of the oral cavity.

dr.nmirjalili@gmail.com

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