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Oral health considerations among cancer survivors

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Usually, Patients with cancer encounter assaults on their oral health from both the disease and the treatment option. While most of these are manageable, complications can have a profound impact on quality of life. Compromised oral health prior to, during, and following cancer therapy can affect treatment outcomes.

Despite the significant advances in the cancer therapy which had a great impact on prolonging the survival rate, these patients are potentially at high risk for developing a number of oral complications, ranging from acute oral complications including oral mucositis and infections, to late complications including hyposalivation, caries, taste changes, trismus and jaw osteonecrosis.

Cancer survivors, depending on the specific cancer and modalities of therapy, may remain at life-long risk of developing oral complications which require increased awareness and recognition to promote prevention and appropriate intervention as well as long-term dental follow-up after completion of cancer therapy.

It is therefore important for the primary oncologist and the dentist to be aware of these complications. Prevention and management is best provided via multidisciplinary health care teams, which must be integrated and communicate effectively in order to provide the best patient care in a coordinated manner at the appropriate time. Patients should typically undergo thorough oral examination prior to initiation of therapy, during and after therapy to identify any active infection. The aim of this presentation is to discuss potential oral complications as a result of cancer therapy and their management and what are certain precautions we should be aware of for these patients.

Biography

Maha Ali Al-Mohaya is currently working as Chairman, Consultant of Oral Medicine & Medically Compromised Dental Division. She is the Deputy of Chief Editor of the Saudi Medical Journal Chairman of Excellence Committee at PSMC Member of Research and Ethical Committee and CPR Committee at PSMC

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