



Head and Neck Side Effects and Suggested Treatments

Cleansing Agents and Topical Pain Medications for Mouth and Throat

- ___ Salt and Soda Rinses – ¼ tsp salt and ¼ tsp baking soda in 8 oz water or 1 tsp salt and 1 tsp baking soda in quart of water. Direction: Rinse and spit after meals and at bedtime or more often as needed.
- ___ Magic mouthwash – 15ml (1tablespoon) swish and swallow every 4 hours as needed (numbing, coating, and antifungal ingredients).
- ___ Gelclair – 1 package in 1-2 tablespoons of water, swish and spit. Not harmful if swallowed (provides a protective barrier for pain control).
- ___ Viscous Xylocaine – 5ml before meals & bedtime, swish & swallow, 8 oz. Watch gag reflex.
- ___ Ulcerese – rinse or gargle and spit every 2 hours as needed, OTC 6 oz. bottles.

Dry Mouth Therapies (Xerostomia)

- ___ Caphosol – Mix 1 blue and 1 clear ampule in a clean glass. Swish ½ solution and spit out. Repeat with remaining solution. Avoid eating or drinking for 15 minutes. May use 4-10 times daily.
- ___ Salagen 5mg – 1 tablet three times a day to promote salivary flow (may initially experience sweating, flushing, runny nose, or dizziness). Caution in retinal or cardiovascular disease or COPD.
- ___ Evoxac 30mg – 1 tablet three times a day 1 hour before meals to promote salivary flow.
- ___ Amifostine subcutaneous injection daily 30 minutes before treatment (possible side effects low blood pressure, nausea/vomiting,rash).
- ___ Numoisyn Lozenges or Liquid – 1 lozenge or ½ teaspoon as needed for dry mouth.
- ___ Artificial Saliva – Over The Counter e.g. Oral Balance Dry Mouth Moisturizing Liquid or other Biotene Products, Oasis Moisturizing Mouth Spray, Moi-Stir, Salivart, and Med-Oral Spray.
- ___ Also frequent sips of water, sugarless candy and gum may be helpful. Xylitol gum may help prevent dental caries.

Prevention of dental caries/osteoradionecrosis –(Injury to bone in mouth or jaw)

- ___ Flouride Gel Trays (Prescribed by dentist)
- ___ Flouride Rinse – MEDOral Anti-Microbial Fluoride Rinse (0.63% stannous fluoride) – Once daily at bedtime, Prevident dental rinse – 0.2% neutral sodium fluoride, 16 oz. (Colgate)

Oral Candidiasis (Yeast/Thrush)

- ___ Diflucan 100mg, 2 tablets the first day, then 1 tablet daily for 6 additional days.
- ___ Nystatin Oral Suspension 100,000 units/ml, 5 ml (1 tsp) swish and swallow four times a day.

Pain Medications

- ___ Lortab elixer 7.5/500mg 10ml (2 teaspoons) every 6 hours as needed for throat pain.
- ___ Oxycodone 5mg/5ml – 5ml every 6 hours as needed for pain for moderate to severe pain
- ___ Duragesic 25-100mcg, 1 patch to be applied to skin every 72 hours for severe pain.

Thickened Saliva

- ___ Guaifenesin (200-400mg 3-4 times a day). OTC brands Robitussin, Mucinex 6mg extended release tablets, 1-2 tablets every 12 hours. Do not crush, chew or break. May help loosen phlegm (mucus) and thin secretions.
- ___ Also humidifiers and suction machines (may be rented from medical supply company with a prescription) have been found to be helpful.
- ___ Transderm Scopolamine 1.5mg, apply patch on the skin behind ear, and replace every 72 hours.

Other measures being studied to reduce severity of mouth soreness include:

50 to 100 mg elemental zinc daily (220-440 mg ZnSO₄)

Saforis is an oral formulation of glutamine that is under review by FDA and has been shown to be effective in reducing the incidence of mucositis in breast cancer patients.

Probiotics

Topical Oral Morphine Gel