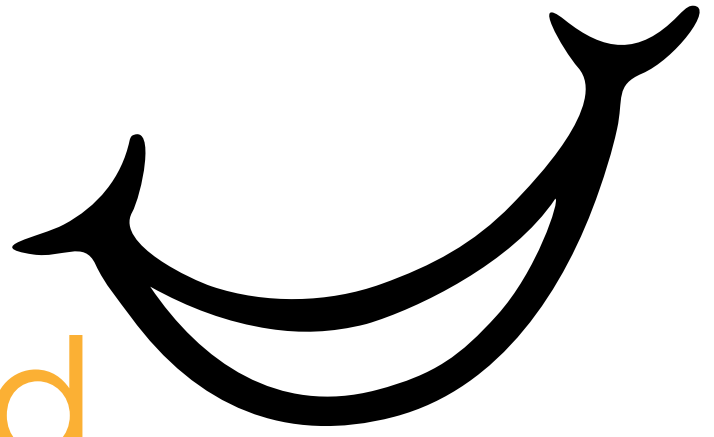


# Mouths made good

## by oral mucositis management



Before you start cancer therapy, here's what you can do to prevent oral mucositis, and if you've already started treatment here are some strategies to cope with and to treat oral mucositis.

Oral mucositis	
<b>Preventing it</b>	<p>The most important aspect of preventing oral mucositis before and during treatment is good nutrition and oral hygiene</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a daily routine prior to chemo- or radiotherapy, including tooth brushing with a soft brush twice a day and using mouth rinses, can help prevent oral mucositis developing</li> <li>• Before treatment begins it is a good idea to visit the dentist at your hospital to sort out any existing dental issues, which may otherwise encourage infection once cancer treatment starts</li> <li>• Even people who haven't had any tooth decay for a long time may develop cavities as a result of radiotherapy. A hospital dentist should check for this throughout cancer treatment</li> <li>• The electrolyte mouth rinse Caphosol®* is proven to help prevent oral mucositis<sup>1</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Treating it</b>	<p>Cleaning the mouth regularly and gently brushing the teeth after every meal will help to improve the symptoms</p> <p>Use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mouth rinses</b> – several mouth rinses are available to help moisten, soothe and heal the mouth but only Caphosol® is clinically proven to help prevent, reduce the duration and the pain of oral mucositis<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• <b>Gels</b> – gels form a protective barrier over the ulcers preventing direct contact with food and drink</li> <li>• <b>Fluoride toothpaste</b> – fluoride helps to strengthen the tooth enamel and protects against decay and infection</li> </ul>

\*Caphosol® is indicated as an adjunct to standard oral care in the prevention and treatment of the mucositis that may be caused by radiation or chemotherapy  
For more information about Caphosol® visit [http://www.caphosol.eu/product\\_info\\_hcp.asp](http://www.caphosol.eu/product_info_hcp.asp)

## Oral mucositis

### Treating it (cont.)

- **Floss** – flossing between the teeth once a day helps keep the mouth free of infection, but check with your doctor or nurse first as flossing is not recommended for every patient
- **Soft toothbrush** – using a soft bristled toothbrush reduces the risk of bleeding. Using a new toothbrush each month and at the start of each chemotherapy cycle protects against infection
- **Ice cubes, lollies or ice-cream** – sucking on ice soothes the mouth and helps to keep it moist. Ice cubes can be sharp, so check with your doctor before you use them
- **Lip balms or creams** – using lip balm help keeps the lips lubricated
- **Drinks** – drinking plenty of fluids helps maintain mouth moisture
- **Soft food** – cooking solid food longer or even blending it reduces the pain of eating with oral mucositis
- **Pain medication** – prescription drugs can help with pain

### Avoid

- **Smoking** – irritation of the mouth can occur with smoking
- **Alcohol** – drinking alcohol or using alcohol based mouth washes will irritate the lining of the mouth
- **Certain foods** – tomatoes and foods that are acidic (such as citrus fruit), spicy, hot, rough or hard should be avoided. See below for more information about diet and nutrition

### Eating with it

Oral mucositis can make it painful and unpleasant to eat. However, during treatment it is extremely important to eat as much as the pain will allow

- Slender people need to take extra care to increase their weight before treatment starts and high-energy snacks between meals will help with this
- Dietary supplements are available if the pain of oral mucositis makes it too difficult to eat enough. Gentle tooth brushing after each meal and snack will help to keep infection away

#### Stay away from:

##### **Rough or crunchy food**

Dry cereals, toast, popcorn, plain rice, raw vegetables, hard fruit and fried food

##### **Dry food**

Baked or fried meat, biscuits, crackers, bread, buns and dry cakes

#### Stock up on:

Cooked or milk-soaked cereal, pancakes, French toast, pasta, food cooked in or served in sauce and soft fruit like bananas. To soften vegetables add butter or margarine

Soft casseroles, egg, ground meat, meat served with gravy, mashed potato, biscuits dipped in drinks, crackers and bread soaked in soup, jelly and custard poured over cakes

#### Cooking tips:

Cutting up food into small pieces will mean less chewing is needed. Blending hard food will also make it easier to swallow

Cooking or simmering dry food will soften it, making it easier to eat

## Oral mucositis

### Eating with it (cont.)

<b>Alcohol</b> Beer, wine and spirits	Milk, milkshakes, non-citrus juices and non-fizzy soft drinks. Adding water to strong drinks can make them more drinkable	Use a straw to drink
<b>Sharp or acidic food</b> Citrus fruit and tomatoes. Including food, drinks and sauces containing citrus fruit or tomatoes	Canned peaches and pears, apple sauce, soft fruit like bananas and sauces containing milk, yoghurt or cheese	Eating using a small spoon helps to reduce the amount of food in each mouthful
<b>Very hot food and drink</b> Hot drinks or soups and those containing caffeine	Milkshakes and melted ice cream	Cool soups and drinks to a manageable temperature
<b>Highly seasoned food</b> Curry, chilli seasoned, peppery and salty foods	Garlic, herb and onion seasoning and cream or cheese sauces	

For information about oral mucositis or Caphosol® speak to your doctor or nurse and read the other resource factsheets available at [www.mouthsmadegood.com](http://www.mouthsmadegood.com)

#### Reference:

1. Papas AS et al. *Bone Marrow Transplant* 2003;**31**:705–712.