Patient Empowerment Network

5 Things to know about

Oral health during cancer treatment

Cancer treatment can affect your mouth, teeth, and gums. Taking care of your oral health and choosing the right products can help reduce discomfort and protect your mouth during treatment. Here are five things to know:

1 A healthy mouth can help reduce side effects

Keeping your mouth clean and healthy may help reduce oral side effects, such as mouth sores (oral mucositis). Removing dental plaque also helps protect against cavities, gum inflammation, and infections.



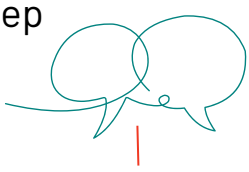
2 Use a gentle toothbrush

An extra-soft toothbrush with a small, compact head can make brushing more comfortable and help remove plaque while minimizing irritation to sensitive or tender tissue.



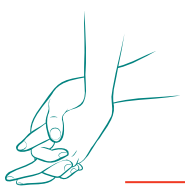
3 Dry mouth can be managed

Dry mouth is a common side effect of many cancer treatments and medications. Oral moisturizers can help keep your mouth comfortable and may help protect against cavities, infections, taste changes, and mouth sores.



4 Choose oral care products carefully

Avoid products with potentially irritating ingredients such as Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (SLS), alcohol, tartar control ingredients, strong flavors, or whitening agents. These may increase dryness or irritate sensitive tissue.



5 Keep your dental team informed

Some cancer medications can have long-term effects on oral health. Make sure your dentist and hygienist know about your medical condition and all medications you take so they can provide safe and appropriate dental care.

