What Is Mucositis?
Mucositis is sores or inflammation on the lining of the mouth. This often develops as a side effect of chemotherapy, radiation therapy, a bone marrow transplant, oral surgery, or poor oral hygiene.

It is important to eat well while undergoing cancer treatment. Patients who eat poorly are more likely to get mouth sores.

What Should I Do If I Have Mucositis?

• Ask your health care provider if there is anything you can apply directly to the sores to ease the pain.
• Rinse your mouth with a warm salt water solution (two teaspoons salt in one quart of water) four times a day.
• Increase your fluid intake to at least eight to ten cups of liquid each day.
• Brush your teeth three times a day with a soft toothbrush. If the toothbrush is too hard on your gums, try using Toothette swabs or gauze.

How Is Mucositis Treated?

Your health care provider will help decide the best treatment for you, and may prescribe one or more of these treatments:

• Pain management
• Antifungal medication
• Changes in your chemotherapy or radiation treatment

When Should I Call My Doctor or Nurse?

Call if any of the following things happen:

• Your mouth does not heal or gets worse.
• White patches that do not scrape off appear on your lips, gums, or tongue.

If you feel sick, take your temperature. Call your doctor or nurse if you have a temperature over 100.5°F.

Helpful Suggestions

• Eat foods cold or at room temperature.
• Eat soft foods such as ice cream, eggs, yogurt, custard, mashed potatoes, bananas, rice, and macaroni and cheese.
• Use fluids to soften hard foods.
• Eat lots of protein.
• Use a mouth moisturizer such as Biotene, which is available at many pharmacies.
• Use lip balm.
• Avoid products that can irritate the mouth, including alcoholic beverages; spicy, acidic foods; tobacco smoke; and mouthwashes.
• Carry a water bottle with you. Drinking plenty of water helps keep the mouth moist.

Registered dietitians in the Linda B. and Robert B. Wiggins Wellness-Survivorship Center can help you make a diet plan. Call 801-587-4585 to make an appointment or for more information.