

## Mouth Sores (mucositis)

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Chemotherapy can sometimes cause an inflammation of the lining of the mouth (mucositis). The skin in the mouth may be red, swollen, painful and have sores. This can make it easier for germs to enter the blood and cause infection.

### What are signs of mucositis?

- Sore lips, mouth or throat
- Difficulty swallowing
- Drooling
- Bleeding in the mouth or gums
- White patches or sores in the mouth or throat

It is important to keep the mouth as clean as possible by following the clean routine. Mucositis cannot always be prevented, but there are things you can do to help.

### **If your child has mouth sores (mucositis):**

- Brush teeth gently with a soft toothbrush and water 2 times a day.
- Rinse with salt water (normal saline) or mouthwash provided by your medical team.
- Do not use alcohol-based rinses as this dries out the mouth.
- Rinsing the mouth after vomiting can also help with healing and comfort.
- Offer soft or moist foods that are easy to chew and swallow.
- Avoid citrus fruit or juices and spicy or salty foods.
- Serve food at room temperature.

**Let the medical team know of any changes as soon as possible such as sores, white patches, redness or bleeding gums.**

See other side for cold therapy (cryotherapy) and chemotherapy →

## Cold Therapy (Cryotherapy) and Chemotherapy:

Certain chemotherapy medications given in under 60 minutes can benefit from cold therapy (cryotherapy).

Cryotherapy is having your child eat or suck on something very cold during the time they receive the chemotherapy. The cold makes the blood vessels in the mouth smaller, giving the medicine in the blood less time in the mouth to cause mucositis.

If your child is receiving one of these drugs below and the drug is to be given in under 60 minutes, ask your health care team if they can try cold therapy.

- ✓ Doxorubicin/daunorubicin
- ✓ Cyclophosphamide/ifosfamide
- ✓ Cisplatin/Carboplatin
- ✓ Quick (Bolus) Methotrexate

### How does cold therapy (cryotherapy) work?

When the chemotherapy is running through your child's IV, eating or drinking cold things may help to lower the chances of mouth sores.

Have your child try:

- Drinking ice cold drinks or slushies
- Sucking on ice cubes or crushed ice
- Eating cold food (popsicles, ice cream)