Mucositis Management for patients treated with chemotherapy

This information sheet is aimed at providing patients undergoing chemotherapy with evidence-based information about the management of oral (mouth) mucositis.

Mucositis is a toxicity of cancer therapy that affects the lining surface of the mouth and the rest of the gastro-intestinal tract.

Patients undergoing cytotoxic treatment, particularly hematopoietic stem cell transplantation, high-dose chemotherapy or radiation to the head and neck region.

The MASCC/ISOO mucositis guidelines are a set of clinical practice recommendations and suggestions developed by MASCC/ISOO mucositis study group (MSG)**.

The MSG used the methodology of a systematic review of the medical, dental and health literature of mucositis interventions: reviewing all the published clinical trials, grading the evidences and weighing it all into a conclusion per intervention.¹

There are recommendations or suggestions in favor or against various interventions. Recommendations are based on stronger evidence than suggestions.¹ For more details, please visit the MASCC/ISOO website (http://www.mascc.org/mucositis-guidelines).

Please note that this Information Sheet is based on a critical assessment of the scientific literature. It is not intended to include, nor exclude, all possible interventions, drugs, and methods of care for mucositis.

Your doctor may recommend the choices of prevention and treatment of mucositis based on your specific condition, the availability of an intervention, and all of the circumstances involved.

Oral cryotherapy (placing ice chips or popsicles in the mouth) is recommended to prevent oral mucositis in patients receiving bolus 5-Fluorouracil; hold in the mouth for 30 minutes during this chemotherapy.

Sucralfate mouthwash is not recommended to prevent and/or treat oral mucositis.

Mouthwash containing 0.5% doxepin may be useful to relieve mouth pain related to oral mucositis.

Basic oral care is a comprehensive protocol that is addressing several objectives, such as prevention of infections and controlling oral pain. Supportive care for oral complications of cancer therapy is one of these objectives. For more details check the MASCC/ISOO Oral Care Study Group website (http://www.mascc.org/oral-care).

*MASCC/ISOO – The Multinational Association of Supportive Care in Cancer (MASCC), in partnership with the International Society of Oral Oncology (ISOO), is dedicated to improving the lives of oncology patients, with a focus on prevention and management of the adverse effects of cancer and of cancer therapy.

**The Mucositis Study Group (MSG) of MASCC/ISOO – The MSG is one of the MASCC/ISOO study groups, committed to reducing the burden of mucositis through research, policy, and educational programs.