

## Stomatitis

### What is Stomatitis?

Stomatitis or oral mucositis is a common condition experienced by patients receiving chemotherapy and cancer treatments, such as radiation to the head and neck. Stomatitis can affect a patient's cancer treatment and quality of life.

Stomatitis is defined as injury or inflammation to the tissues of the mouth such as the gums, tongue, roof or floor of the mouth, lips, and cheeks.

### Signs and Symptoms

- Redness, swelling or bleeding of the tongue, lips, or the inside of the mouth
- Soreness or pain in the mouth or the throat
- White patches or pus in the mouth or on the tongue
- Dry or cracked lips
- Dry mouth
- Increased mucus or thickening of saliva
- Difficulty swallowing or talking

### Things to do

- Mix one teaspoon of baking soda and one teaspoon of salt in one quart of water. Rinse with a mouthful every four hours and after meals. Do **not** swallow the solution.
- Drink fluids using a straw.
- Use extra gravies, butter, yogurt, and mayonnaise to moisten foods.
- Eat soft, mashed, or pureed foods, which are easier to chew and swallow.
- Eat canned fruits that are easier to swallow.
- See your dentist regularly.

After meals and at bedtime perform mouth care

- Use a soft toothbrush and toothpaste made of baking soda with fluoride.
- Floss with waxed dental floss or water pik.
- Keep lips moist with cocoa butter or petroleum jelly.
- Remove dentures or prosthetic devices daily and clean them thoroughly.
- If sores develop, leave dentures and prosthetic devices out.

### Things to avoid

- Mouth washes with alcohol content
- Citrus fruits and juice
- Spicy or salty foods
- Rough or dry foods (raw vegetables, toast, granola)
- Very warm or hot foods
- Tobacco
- Alcohol

If you are in need of immediate assistance, please call 732-235-2465 and select the option that best meets your needs.