

Oral Mucositis Starts Day 1



Oral Mucositis (OM) is a significant problem

Oral mucositis is a serious and common side effect of certain cancer treatments that causes severe pain, creates a risk of infection and may interfere with the treatment schedule.¹

- ▶ There is damage to the mucosal lining of the mouth even before redness or sores can be seen²
- ▶ Injury to the mouth occurs very quickly³
- ▶ Treating the early damage can affect how bad the OM will get²

Stages in the development and healing of OM from the start of cancer treatment^{2,4}

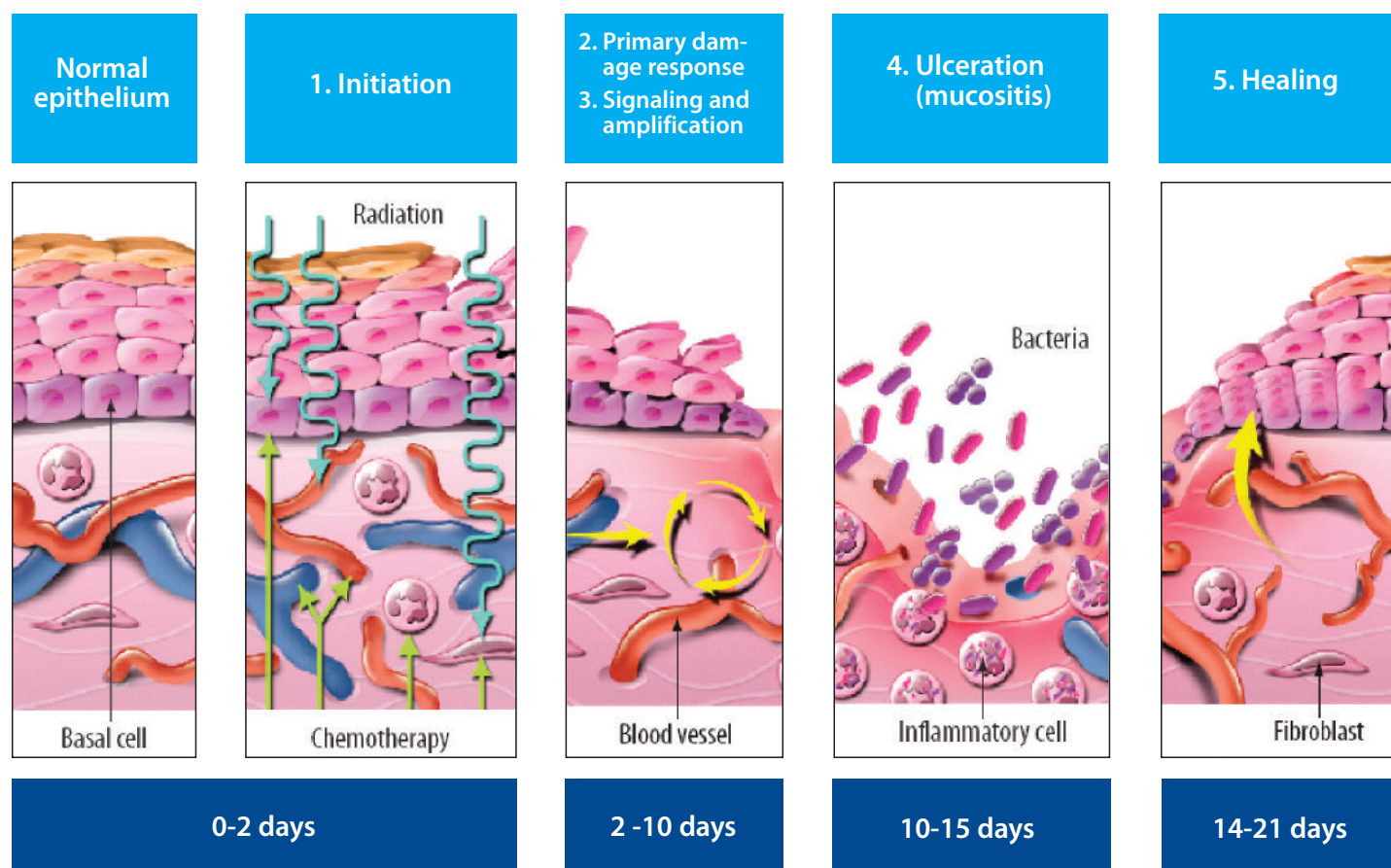


Figure adapted from Sonis ST 2004 & 2007, references 2 & 4.

Taking a proactive approach to a serious complication

Because OM begins early in cancer therapy and can have serious consequences, an aggressive approach to treatment is necessary.



Saliva: care and comfort throughout all phases of treatment

- ▶ Saliva has many important functions, from protecting a healthy mouth to helping heal injured tissues⁵

Risks associated with insufficient saliva

Decreased saliva production (dry mouth/xerostomia) leads to:

- ▶ Decreased ability to heal mouth sores⁵
- ▶ Loss of protective coating, lubrication, and protection from irritating substances⁵
- ▶ Increased risk of infection⁵
- ▶ Altered taste and difficulty chewing, swallowing, and speaking⁶
- ▶ Tooth decay⁵



Effects of dry mouth on the tongue.

Saliva is supersaturated with calcium and phosphate⁷

Why calcium?

Calcium helps tissues stay healthy by:

- ▶ Promoting wound healing: increased calcium levels trigger blood clotting and tissue repair⁸
- ▶ Preserving the integrity of the mucosal lining⁹
- ▶ Defending against infection¹⁰



The same tongue after treatment for dry mouth.

Why phosphate?

Phosphate helps:

- ▶ Repair damaged mucosal cells in the mouth⁸
- ▶ Maintain pH balance, which protects teeth and prevents bacterial and fungal growth⁵
- ▶ Keep teeth strong and prevent cavities⁵

References:

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