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Implications of Radiation Therapy in Prosthodontics

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ABSTRACT

Head and neck cancer is usually treated by radiotherapy in conjunction with surgery or chemotherapy. There are several undesirable side effects that occur as a result of radiation therapy, especially in the oral cavity, which include xerostomia, oropharyngeal candidiasis, radiation induced caries and oral mucositis, and osteoradionecrosis. Certain measures can be taken to address these adverse effects like planning extraction well before radiotherapy to prevent osteoradionecrosis, salivary substitutes to compensate for xerostomia, antifungal medication to control candida infections, and timely restorations to control radiation induced caries. Proper denture hygiene is crucial and dental implants should be planned according to the time of radiation therapy to avoid the risk of developing osteoradionecrosis.

KEYWORDS: Radiation therapy, mucositis, xerostomia, osteoradionecrosis, oropharyngeal candidiasis, radiation related dental caries, prosthodontic implications

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