

CAMP HILL, Pa. (Feb. 3, 2023) –[More than one-third of all cancer patients develop complications that affect the mouth](#) On Feb. 4, World Cancer Day, United Concordia Dental shares tips for keeping your mouth healthy during cancer treatment.

“Chemotherapy, radiation and other types of cancer treatment can cause mouth sores, dry mouth, infection, changes in taste and other side effects,” said Anthony Warren, DDS, dental director, United Concordia Dental. “Taking extra care of your dental health during cancer treatment can help prevent these oral complications, allowing you to focus on overall wellness.”

Here are five tips to help maintain a healthy mouth while being treated for cancer:

1. **Schedule a dental exam and cleaning before starting cancer treatment** Cavities, gum disease and loose fillings and crowns can worsen or cause problems during cancer treatment. Try to schedule a dental visit at least one month before you start treatment to allow time for the mouth to heal if any dental work is needed.
2. **Practice good oral hygiene.** Gently brush your teeth, gums and tongue with an extra-soft bristle toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste 2-3 times a day, including after meals and before long periods of sleep. Carefully flossing at least once a day – as long as your platelet count is satisfactory – is another healthy habit to include in your dental routine.
3. **Stay hydrated.** Drink plenty of fluids throughout the day – between eight and 12 glasses – and limit alcohol. If you drink beverages other than water, rinse your mouth with water afterward. It is also a good idea to check with your doctor to see if you need to limit caffeine intake.
4. **Be aware of sugar and acid** You may be advised to suck on hard candies or popsicles during chemotherapy to help prevent some side effects, but keep in mind that sugary or acidic foods and drinks can cause oral health problems. Try sugar-free, low acidity options when possible, and rinse your mouth with water soon after eating or drinking.
5. **Avoid dry mouth.** Drinking water throughout the day and chewing sugar-free gum can help keep your mouth moist. Ask your doctor or dentist about products like moisturizing gels and saliva substitutes if problems persist.

For more [tips](#) on taking care of your mouth during cancer treatment, visit the Oral Health Resources section at [UnitedConcordia.com](#).

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