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What is Cancer? Cancer is a disease where abnormal cells uncontrollably divide and spread into surrounding tissues and destroy them.

What is chemotherapy: Chemotherapy is a type of cancer treatment that uses chemicals to stop the cancer cells from dividing. This works throughout the whole body but can have some dire side effects on the oral cavity and these effects are a major cause of illness in patients undergoing chemotherapy

Oral Manifestations from Chemotherapy include:

- Mucositis: most common, it is the painful inflammation and ulceration of the mucous membrane (soft tissues of mouth like the inside of the cheek) Can result in increased risk for infection and inability to eat due to open sores.
- Mouth bleeding/easy bleeding from brushing: sometimes chemotherapy drugs affect the ability of the blood to clot. Bleeding may be mild or severe, especially at the gum line and from ulcers in the mouth from mucositis. If the patient has pre-existing gingivitis or periodontitis, gingival oozing can be induced even by normal brushing and flossing
- Dysgeusia: taste changes
- Mouth infections and vulnerability to infection
- Xerostomia: dry mouth, however this one manifestation can lead to a whole assortment of serious oral problems. Can lead to increased dental caries (cavities), parotid gland

enlargement, difficulty eating, oral candidiasis, salivary gland infection (sialadenitis), and halitosis(bad breath)

- Tongue Pain (glossodynia)
- Osteoradionecrosis: loss of large areas of bone and soft tissue*

*Only a minority of patients goes on to develop osteoradionecrosis and this is thanks to a multidisciplinary collaboration along with better oral hygiene patient education

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