

Dental/Ocular/ Maxillofacial Prosthetic Services

Blood counts

After a transplant, your blood counts may take some time to return to normal. This is quite variable from patient to patient. We will follow-up with you after your transplant and monitor your blood counts. If you require any dental treatment and your blood counts are low, we will advise your oncologist and work with him/her to ensure you receive the best care.

Medications

After your transplant, you may be placed on a number of different medications (e.g. immunosuppressants, antibiotics) which may have oral side effects. Some of these include overgrowth of gum tissue, yeast infections and dry mouth.

Graft versus Host Disease (GVHD)

GVHD can occur in the mouth and result in some discomfort. Generally, your oncologist will treat oral GVHD with medications. It is important to make sure that there are no irritating factors, such as sharp teeth, rough

fillings, or ill-fitting dentures to promote healing of mouth sores.

We will see you after the transplant to assess xerostomia, GVHD and remove sources of irritation to help you recover optimally.

When GVHD occurs in the mouth, it may show up as white lines on the skin inside your mouth. These are usually painless but sometimes they can break down into sores. It may also show up as shrinkage and thinning of the gums.

This can make teeth very sensitive.

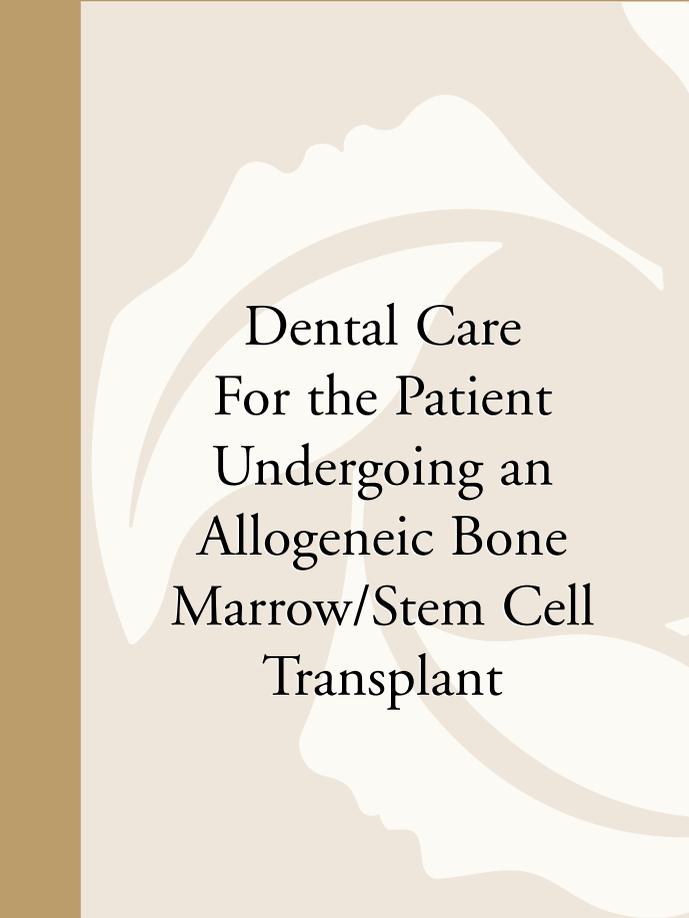
We may be able to make your mouth more comfortable until the GVHD settles down.

In summary, optimal oral and dental health will not only make you feel better, but it will enhance your recovery and prevent problems secondary to your treatment.

Our dental staff working closely with your oncologist has the experience and expertise to diagnose, monitor and manage these.

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Dental Care
For the Patient
Undergoing an
Allogeneic Bone
Marrow/Stem Cell
Transplant



The Role of Dentistry in the Allogeneic Bone Marrow/ Stem Cell Transplant

"I am going to be undergoing a bone marrow/or peripheral stem cell transplant. Why am I seeing the dentist before I am admitted to hospital? When can I see my own dentist?"

The bone marrow transplant is a procedure that requires you to have high dose chemotherapy and/or total body irradiation (TBI) before you receive the marrow or stem cells.

This regimen will make you more prone to all infections and if you have any current infections, they may spread and cause potentially serious complications while you are in the hospital. Your doctors have referred you to the dental clinic so that we can do a thorough oral and X-ray examination to make sure that your teeth will not be a source of infection. Also, there may be some side effects to your mouth with which we can help you.

Not only does our dental team have the expertise and experience in

looking after patients like you, we have easy access to your oncologists and your blood results. It is in your best interests to be treated by our dentists and hygienists until we feel it is safe for you to return to your family dentist. At that time, we will send your radiographs and pertinent information to him/her.

Central Venous Lines (Hickman)

A Hickman line will be placed before your transplant for delivery of the bone marrow/stem cells, intravenous medications, transfusions if necessary and for blood tests. It is important to inform your dentist if you have a Hickman line or a portocath so that he/she can give you appropriate antibiotics before any dental work. Dental work can lead to bleeding which can carry oral bacteria and infect your line. This may include fillings, cleaning, root canal or extractions.

ORAL SIDE EFFECTS

Mucositis

This refers to sores in your mouth that frequently occur after about 1 week of your hospital admission. This is due in part to the chemotherapy and its effects on your immune system. It has been shown that having good oral health with very clean teeth can help to minimize this effect. Good oral hygiene is very important to prevent bleeding gums as this may happen when the platelets in your blood drop in number. Our dental team can show you the necessary steps to achieve optimal oral and dental health.

Sensitive teeth

It is not unusual to have sensitive teeth after a transplant. This is most noticeable with drinking or eating cold foods. Generally, this is a temporary change, but it can be quite bothersome. We have simple measures to treat this to make you more comfortable.

Taste Changes

The chemotherapy may affect the taste buds on your tongue so that food may taste different. This is a temporary change and lasts for about one month after your treatment.

Xerostomia

Xerostomia means "dry mouth". This is usually a temporary condition that results from the chemotherapy. A dry mouth may influence your ability to swallow and will mean that you have to drink more water. It also means that you have to clean your teeth better and more frequently as food will tend to stick to your teeth. If the dryness lasts longer than 3 months, you may be at an increased risk for developing cavities along the root surfaces of your teeth. It is important to have regular and frequent dental check-ups including x-rays to monitor this. We can measure your saliva and if it continues to be low, recommend special fluoride treatments to help prevent dental decay.