
Sore Mouth/Throat

Some people develop sores in their mouths while going through radiation or chemotherapy. Tender gums or throat are also common side effects of these treatments. There are many things to try that may help manage mouth pain.



Tips for dealing with mouth pain

- Eat softer foods such as pudding, soups, mashed potatoes and gravy, custard, casseroles, scrambled eggs, ice cream, Jell-O™, ground or tender meats with gravy/sauces, or hot cereal. Cook food well, until it is very tender.
- Eat and drink room temperature or cold items as these can be very soothing. Use a straw if needed. Ice chips and popsicles can help numb the mouth.
- Make sure to drink plenty of fluids each day. Let carbonated drinks stand for a while at room temperature to get rid of some of the bubbles.
- Moisten foods with gravies, butter, sauces, or yogurt to make them easier to eat.
- Drink high protein drinks such as milkshakes, powdered instant breakfast drinks mixed with whole milk, or eggnog throughout the day.
- Keep your mouth clean, use a soft toothbrush as tolerated. Swishing with mild salt or baking soda and water solution before meals may help reduce soreness. Avoid alcohol-based mouthwashes.

Things to avoid when having mouth pain

- Very hot foods or drinks
- Citrus juices or acidic items such as orange, grapefruit, or tomato juice
- Spicy foods
- Hard or very crunchy foods such as dry toast or crackers
- Alcohol and tobacco
- Carbonated beverages



Let your doctor know if you are having sore mouth or throat symptoms that cannot be managed. There are some medications that may help with mouth pain.