

‘Mucositis in irradiated cáncer patients: Effects of an antiseptic mouthrinse’

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INTRODUCTION

Oral cancer represents 2-4% of all cancer cases diagnosed in Spain, and its prevalence is between 11.4% and 17.4% per 100,000 inhabitants. Treatment for oral cancer (chemotherapy and / or radiation therapy) is effective, but is associated with both short and long-term side effects, including oral mucositis. The oral health of patients with head and neck radiotherapy should be controlled even before starting therapy with the goal of having low levels of plaque and gingivitis. During therapy, it may be difficult or inappropriate to conduct proper oral hygiene with physical elements, thus the chemotherapeutic elements become more important in plaque control. Chlorhexidine is the most active oral antiseptic thanks to its broad spectrum of action and its high substantivity.

AIM

To assess the effects of an antiseptic mouthwash without alcohol containing chlorhexidine (CHX) and cetylpyridinium chloride (CPC), to prevent oral complications associated with radiotherapy for head and neck cancer patients.

MATERIAL & METHODS

A parallel, double-blind, prospective and randomized clinical trial was done. 36 cancer patients who were randomly assigned to one of two treatments, mouthwash test or control, were included. Patients in the test mouthwash used PERIO • AID[®] treatment (0.12% CHX + 0.05% CPC) and the control group used a placebo identical to the test mouthwash but without the active ingredients. Patients were required to carry out their usual oral hygiene and then to use 15 ml of the mouthwash assigned for 30 seconds, twice a day (morning and evening).

3 visits [baseline (start of radiotherapy), 14 and 28 days] were scheduled. The evaluated results were: Presence and degree of mucositis, plaque and gingival indices, stimulated saliva and salivary pH.

RESULTS

The presence and degree of mucositis was significantly increased in both groups, increasing at two weeks the median placebo (1.81) and more than the test group (1.20). Plaque levels were significantly reduced in both groups at both 2 and 4 weeks ($p < 0.05$). No adverse effects were reported in either group.

CONCLUSIONS

A pesar de las limitaciones de una muestra de pequeño tamaño, este estudio sugiere que el uso del colutorio testado puede llevar a algunas mejoras en parámetros clínicos en pacientes de radioterapia de cabeza y cuello. Despite the limitations of the small sample size, this study suggests that the use of the tested mouthwash can lead to some improvement in clinical parameters in patients with head and neck radiotherapy.

PRÁCTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The use of PERIO-AID® Treatment in patients undergoing head and neck radiotherapy is safe and can help to decrease the occurrence of adverse effects such as oral mucositis