

Oral hygiene and Oral mucositis in Head and Neck Cancer patients enrolled in an Oral care program during treatment

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Conclusion

Weekly professional oral care by a dental hygienist seems effective to maintain low levels of plaque and gingival inflammation during treatment of head and neck cancer. The oral care program might decrease the severity of oral mucositis.

Methods

- Head and Neck Cancer patients planned for full dose curative treatment were included.
- Randomized to control /intervention group
- Oral hygiene instructions before treatment and professional oral care once a week during treatment (**control + intervention group**)
- Reinstruction in oral hygiene, rinses with sodium chloride/bicarbonate solution 5 times a day and an oral hygiene diary (**intervention group**)
- Dental plaque and gingival inflammation registered (score 0-3)
- Oral mucositis registered using Oral Mucositis Assessment Scale (OMAS). Ulcerations scored on 9 sites (total score 0-27)

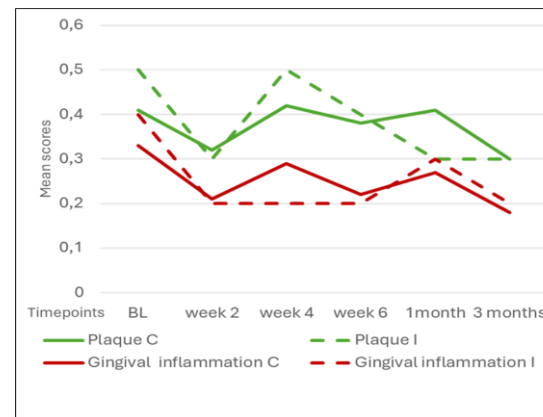
Introduction

Good oral hygiene is important during head and neck cancer treatment. There is a knowledge gap regarding the impact of dental plaque and gingival inflammation on oral mucositis (1).

Objective

To explore oral hygiene levels and oral mucositis during treatment for head and neck cancer

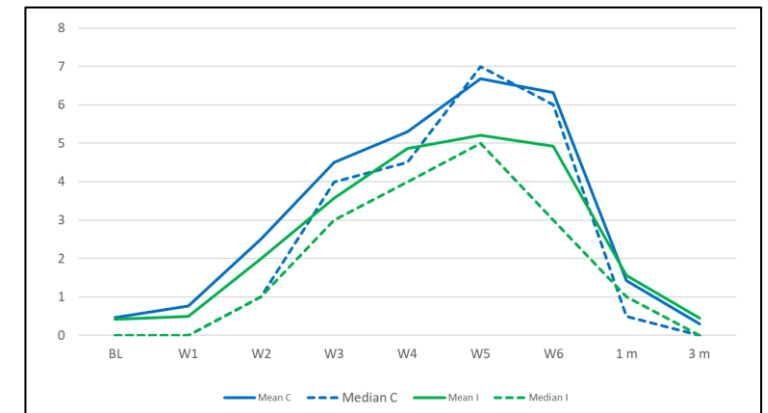
Figure 1. Mean scores for plaque and gingival inflammation at different time-points in the control and intervention groups



Preliminary Results

75 patients (56 men, 19 women) with a mean age of 59 years have been included. The most common diagnosis was oropharyngeal cancer (n=39), and the most common treatment chemoradiotherapy (n=47). Forty-four patients were randomized to the control group and 31 to the intervention group.

Figure 2. Ulceration scores at the different time-points in the control and intervention groups



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Reference 1.Hong, Catherine H L et al. "Systematic review of basic oral care for the management of oral mucositis in cancer patients and clinical practice guidelines." *Supportive care in cancer : official journal of the Multinational Association of Supportive Care in Cancer* vol. 27,10 (2019): 3949-3967.

