

Sore mouth

Symptom Management

Radiotherapy, chemotherapy and some drugs can cause a sore mouth or throat. This problem can be made worse by infection, for example, thrush or by problems with your teeth or dentures.

What can I do?

- Aim to brush your teeth at least twice daily.
- Try to drink approximately eight glasses of fluids a day.
- Try soft foods. It may help to use extra sauces and gravy with your food.
- Avoid alcohol, particularly wines and spirits that will irritate sore areas.
- Avoid rough or textured foods such as mince and cereals which can get caught in sore areas; smooth foods can be swallowed more easily.
- Avoid very hot foods; try warm, cool or frozen foods and drinks to see which temperature is most comfortable.
- Avoid sharp or spicy foods which will irritate sore areas such as curry, chillies, pepper, tomato sauces, oranges and citrus fruits, vinegar and crisps.
- If you like soups, choose creamy smooth (blended) ones such as cream of chicken, or specialist nutritional soups.
- Check with your care team before using mouth washes or gels.
- Please also see our information leaflet: [Eating well when you have cancer](#) on the Patient Information Library which provides further information about problems that can affect eating.

When to call The Royal Marsden Hotline:

- If your pain has significantly increased since your last review and you have difficulty eating or drinking and/or reduced urinary output.

Contact us



The Royal Marsden Hotline: 020 8915 6899
(available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

