Dental Research Directory

A practical guide for patients undergoing exodontia following radiotherapy to the oral cavity. Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy

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Dental extractions or minor oral surgery in patients who have undergone radiation therapy for cancer in the head and neck carry the risk of one of the most serious and devastating complications of head and neck radiotherapy, that of osteoradionecrosis (ORN). A totally unified approach to dental extractions following radiotherapy is lacking. The role of the general dental practitioner in management of patients following radiotherapy is crucial. Contrary to clinical impression, the risk of ORN does not decrease with time.

When contemplating exodontia or minor oral surgery in the irradiated patient, special consideration should be given to issues such as radiotherapy history, surgical assessment, surgical procedure and the role of antibiotics and hyperbaric oxygen.

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