

Side effects Head and Neck Cancer Radiation Treatment

| Organ System | Early Complications (Days-Months After Treatment) | Late Complications (Months-Years After Treatment) |
|--------------|--|--|
| General | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute fatigue • Weight loss | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic fatigue (uncommon) • Second cancer (rare, but increased risk with continued smoking) |
| Skin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redness • Peeling and/or blistering • Swelling • Tenderness or pain | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tissue scarring, thickening, firmness (fibrosis) • Coloration changes (lighter or darker) • Tissue thinning |
| Salivary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry mouth • Thick secretions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry mouth |
| Taste | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased or altered taste | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased or altered taste |
| Throat | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain with swallowing • Difficulty swallowing • Need for a feeding tube | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty swallowing • Need for a feeding tube |
| Mouth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain • Ulcerations • Difficulty opening mouth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty opening mouth • Radiation necrosis of jaw • Dental problems |
| Neck | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swelling • Tightening of muscles • Changes in voice • Hoarseness • Swelling of voice box | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tightening of muscles • Changes in voice • Hoarseness • Swelling of voice box • Decrease in thyroid function |
| Eyes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased tearing • Irritation • Dry eye | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased tearing • Dry eye • Vision changes (rare) • Cataract |
| Ears | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling of fullness • Irritation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased hearing |
| Hair | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facial hair loss or thinning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facial hair loss or thinning |
| Nose | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritation • Increased discharge • Dryness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dryness |
| Lungs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inflammation • Shortness of breath • Cough | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scarring • Shortness of breath • Cough |
| Arm | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nerve dysfunction (rare) |