The effect of honey on mucositis induced by chemoradiation in head and neck cancer.


Source

Department of Radiotherapy, NRS Medical College, Kolkata 700014.

Abstract

The aim of this study was to evaluate the effect of pure natural honey on radiation-induced mucositis. Fifty-five patients diagnosed with head and neck cancer requiring radiation to the oropharyngeal mucosal area were divided into two groups (study arm-28 and control arm-27) to receive either chemoradiation or chemoradiation plus topical application of honey. Patients were treated using a telecobalt machine at 2 Gy per day, five times a week up to a total dose of 66 Gy. In the study arm, patients were advised to take 20 ml of honey 15 minutes before, 15 minutes after and similar amount at bed time. Patients were evaluated every week for the development of radiation mucositis using the WHO grading system. There was significant reduction in the symptomatic grades 3 and 4 mucositis in honey-treated patients compared to controls ie, 18% versus 41% for grade 3 and 4% versus 22% for grade 4 mucositis. Seventy-one per cent of patients treated with topical honey showed no change or a positive gain in body weight. In the control group also 22% had no weight loss, though none showed weight gain. Furthermore, it didn't affect blood sugar level when initial fasting blood sugar level was < 150 mg%. Honey is a cheap, simple, easily available and effective agent in reducing radiation-induced mucositis. Within the limits of this study the results showed the application of natural honey is effective in managing radiation induced mucositis, which warrants further multicentric randomised trials to validate the findings.

PMID:23520669