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THANTAWAN NATETHONG : THE EFFECTS OF ICE-CHIPS IN THE PREVENTION AND RELIEF OF ORAL MUCOSITIS IN CANCER PATIENTS RECEIVING CHEMOTHERAPY. THESIS ADVISORS : SOMCHIT HANUCHARURNKUL, M.S.N, Ph.D., VORACHAI RATTANATHARATHORN, M.D., (THE AMERICAN BOARD OF INTERNAL MEDICINE AND MEDICAL ONCOLOGY, 54 P. ISBN 974-662-804-6

This experimental research was designed to test the effectiveness of ice-chips in the prevention and relief of oral mucositis in cancer patients receiving chemotherapy. The sample consisted of twenty colorectal cancer patients receiving chemotherapy between January to March 1999 in two settings: the Oncology, Out-Patient Clinic, Department of Medicine and the Short Stay Service Room at Sirikit Medical Center, Ramathibodi Hospital, Mahidol University, Thailand. Subjects were purposively selected according to pre-determined criteria. Change-over design was used in this research study to compare the incidence and severity of oral mucositis among patients between two periods: the use of ice-chips and the non use of ice-chips period. Subjects received the usual care provided by the staff of the oncology settings but in the experimental period, patients placed the ice-chips in their oral cavity 5 minutes before each chemotherapy treatment and continued the ice-chips administration for a total of 30 minutes in each session during a 5 day chemotherapy course. The patients performed self-assessment of oral mucositis using the WHO Toxicity Guideline. This guideline was translated into the Thai language.

Results of the study indicated that during the ice chips period, the incidence, severity and duration of oral mucositis was significantly less than in the control period ($p < .05$, $< .01$ and $< .05$, respectively). The onset of oral mucositis during the ice-chips period was significantly later than in the control period ($p < .05$). Furthermore, the application of ice-chips to the oral cavity was convenient and inexpensive for the total course of cancer treatment. Thus, the ice-chips provide an effective and inexpensive means of preventing and relieving oral mucositis.