Efficacy of Phytotherapy in Oral Mucosites Induced by Chemotherapy and Radiotherapy

Phytotherapy in OM really work?

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Introduction

Oral mucositis (OM) is a complication of cancer therapy. Because of the associated complications, patients with OM go through decreasing doses or until the suspension of chemotherapy treatment or radiotherapy of head and neck until the improvement of the clinical picture, with that, exposing them the progression of the tumor. Current treatments produce limited results and rely on oral cryotherapy using ice, low-power laser exposure and systemic administration of keratinocyte growth factor (Palifermin). The use of medicinal plants and herbal medicine in the treatment of OM is still little used, but with a tendency to expand and accept the pharmaceutical market. We can conclude that phytotherapy is an expanding market and that, although efficient, needs more research and better acceptance of oncologists and other health professionals. Also some mechanisms of action are still not well understood, therefore, studies are needed that evaluate the long-term effects, in addition to standardized clinical protocols that prove efficacy. An efficient natural product in the treatment of OM should have an anti-inflammatory, bactericidal, antioxidant and healing effect on oral mucosa. In this sense, the search for multi-herbs products can be promising, since the plants together can have superior synergistic effects to the isolated species. However, there are few products in the current market with this profile.

Abstract

Oral mucositis (OM) is a complication of cancer therapy. Because of the associated complications, patients with OM go through decreasing doses or until the suspension of chemotherapy treatment or radiotherapy of head and neck until the improvement of the clinical picture, with that, exposing them the progression of the tumor. Current treatments produce limited results and rely on oral cryotherapy using ice, low-power laser exposure and systemic administration of keratinocyte growth factor (Palifermin). The use of medicinal plants and herbal medicine in the treatment of OM is still little used, but with a tendency to expand and accept the pharmaceutical market. We can conclude that phytotherapy is an expanding market and that, although efficient, needs more research and better acceptance of oncologists and other health professionals. Also some mechanisms of action are still not well understood, therefore, studies are needed that evaluate the long-term effects, in addition to standardized clinical protocols that prove efficacy. An efficient natural product in the treatment of OM should have an anti-inflammatory, bactericidal, antioxidant and healing effect on oral mucosa. In this sense, the search for multi-herbs products can be promising, since the plants together can have superior synergistic effects to the isolated species. However, there are few products in the current market with this profile.

Keywords: OM; Phytotherapy; Cancer therapy

Abbreviations: Oral Mucositis (OM); Inducible Nitric Oxide Synthase Enzyme (iNOS); Nitric Oxide (NO); Interleukin 1 beta (IL-1β); Tumor Necrosis Factor Alpha (TNF-α)
Honey has been used in the treatment of OM in reducing the frequency of mucositis and associated bacterial infection, but with conflicting results in some studies [10]. Honey in another study showed no statistical significance compared to placebo [11]. The leaves of *Camellia sinensis* L. are used in an exaggeration, BaxidiOnco®, with antioxidant action and success in reducing the incidence, severity and duration of OM [12]. *Acacia catechu* has been used in mouthwash for its anti-inflammatory and cicatricial actions, with promising results [13]. *Calendula officinalis* has been used in the treatment of OM with a significant reduction in lesion intensity [14].

**Conclusion**

We can conclude that phytotherapy is an expanding market and that, although efficient, needs more research and better acceptance of oncologists and other health professionals. Also some mechanisms of action are still not well understood, therefore, studies are needed that evaluate the long-term effects, in addition to standardized clinical protocols that prove efficacy. OM, because it is a frequent complication, requires research that seeks to improve patients’ quality of life, reducing pain and the appearance of lesions. An efficient natural product in the treatment of OM should have an anti-inflammatory, bactericidal, antioxidant and healing effect on oral mucosa. In this sense, the search for multi-herbal products can be promising, since the plants together can have superior synergistic effects to the individual plants. In this sense, the search for multi-herbal products can be promising, since the plants together can have superior synergistic effects to the individual plants.

**References**