



The Importance of Dental Treatments for Breast Cancer Patients

Breast cancer is the most common malignant disease, approximately 2 million cases are diagnosed each year. It is also the leading cause of death among women worldwide.

After the diagnosis, it is important to determine the severity of the disease in order to match the right treatment. A histopathologic diagnosis is required to diagnose the disease. The first tumor is confirmed in a clinical test, as well as complementary imaging tests such as a sonogram and mammography.

Women who suffer from periodontal diseases or have poor dental care are 11 times more likely to be diagnosed with breast cancer than healthy women.

Dental and oral health can affect the oncological treatment plan; however, the oncological treatment could cause severe oral side effects.

Some of the treatments include taking medication such as Bisphosphonates: Actonel, Prolia, Fosamax. Patients are prescribed these medications primarily because breast cancer treatments can cause Osteoporosis. These medications contribute to bone density and strength and treat Osteoporosis.

Long-term use of Bisphosphonates is associated with osteonecrosis of the jaw bones (ONJ). The risk for ONJ is even higher in chemotherapy patients. It is important to start dental treatments before chemotherapy and taking Bisphosphonates.

Breast cancer and its treatments might expose patients to oral side effects, such as:

- Severe oral mucosa infections – pain that affects swallowing, taste, appetite, speech and sleep.
- Higher risk for dental caries due to a decrease in saliva, swallowing and speech issues.
- Ageusia.

- Higher risk for developing postoperative infections due to a decrease in white blood cell count (cells that help the body fight off infections).
- Treatments might occasionally cause pain and a burning sensation that resembles dental pain.

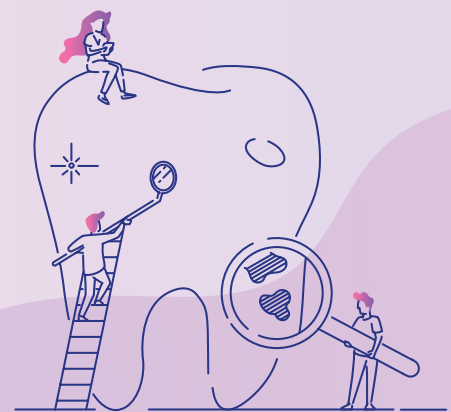
Side effects can be prevented and reduced if you seek dental medical attention before you begin your treatments. It is best to start chemotherapy after you have completed your dental treatment and maintained your oral hygiene and health. It is important to complete surgical procedures at least two weeks before starting treatments that include radiation therapy.

The dental plan must address infections and complication prevention, as they might occur and risk the oncological treatment course.

Your oncologist must be informed about any dental treatment during chemotherapy treatment.

In order to reduce side effects, you should:

- Use a softer toothbrush.
- Make sure to floss.
- Use alcohol free mouthwash.
- If your blood count is low, you must not have dental treatments.
- Do not overlook bleeding gums, even if the bleeding is mild.
- Do not schedule dental treatment appointments a week before and after a chemotherapy session.
- Use toothpastes that contain Xylitol.
- Visit your dentist often.
- Maintain your dentures cleanliness.



Dental Treatments Oncological Patients are Entitled to Prior to Chemotherapy/ Radiation Treatments:

Dental Maintenance Treatments:

- Regular dental check-ups, including imaging and treatment plans.
- Fillings: Amalgam for premolars and molar teeth, composite fillings (white fillings) for incisors and canine teeth.
- Root canals and endodontic retreatments.

- Tooth extraction
- Tartar buildup removal, oral hygiene instructions and fluoridization.

Rehabilitative Dental Treatments:

- Immediate dentures
- Acrylic full dentures and partials.
- Dental crowns / resin bonded bridge



How Much Does It Cost?

Rates change according to the type of clinic you choose to visit:

- **Maccabi-dent:** 50% coinsurance of Maccabi-dent's treatment pricelist.
- **Private Dental Clinic:** 50% reimbursement of treatment cost according to Maccabi-dent pricelist. The reimbursement will be provided at the clinical center, after payment is completed at the dental clinic.
- **Hospital Dental Clinic:** 50% reimbursement of treatment cost according to Maccabi-dent pricelist, after having received a recommendation from a dental health consultant.



Where Can I Get the Treatments?

- Maccabi-dent clinics.
- Dental clinics that work with Maccabi.
- Private dental clinics
- Hospital dental clinics



What Should I Do?

- Provide your clinic with a referral letter or medical recommendation letter, detailing your diagnosis, chemotherapy or radiation treatment schedule, in order to receive an approval for treatments.
- If you have chosen to receive dental treatment at a private or hospital dental clinic, present your chemotherapy treatment plan or referral to your chosen clinic.
- To receive reimbursement, submit a request on the Maccabi Online application or website, and attach the original receipt and invoice. If necessary, the documents can also be submitted electronically at the clinic, or sent via registered mail to the clinic.

Dental Treatments for Oncological Patients After Chemotherapy / Radiation Treatments:

Dental treatment oncological patients are entitled to treatment **up to two years after receiving chemotherapy/radiation treatments:**

Dental Maintenance Treatments, including:

- Regular dental check-ups, including imaging and treatment plans.
- Fillings: Amalgam for premolars and molar teeth, composite fillings (white fillings) for incisors and canine teeth.
- Root canals and endodontic retreatments.
- Tooth extraction
- Tartar buildup removal, oral hygiene instructions and fluoridization.

Rehabilitative Dental Treatments, including:

- Immediate dentures
- Acrylic full dentures and partials.
- Dental crowns/resin bonded bridge



How Much Does It Cost?

Rates change according to the type of clinic you choose to visit:

- **Maccabi-dent:** free of charge up to two years after the chemotherapy or radiation treatments.
- **Private Dental Clinic:** reimbursement according to Maccabi-dent's pricelist maximum rate, up to two years after the chemotherapy or radiation treatments. Patients will be reimbursed at the clinic after having paid at the private dental clinic. The reimbursement will be provided at the clinical center, after payment is completed at the dental clinic.
- **Hospital Dental Clinic:** requires Maccabi's preapproval. After the treatment is approved, full reimbursement without copayment.



Where Can I Get the Treatments?

- Maccabi-dent clinics.
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- Private dental clinics
- Hospital dental clinics



What Should I Do?

- Provide your clinic with a referral letter or medical recommendation letter, detailing your diagnosis, chemotherapy or radiation treatment schedule, in order to receive an approval for treatments.
- At a private or hospital dental clinic – present chemotherapy treatment plan or referrals + referral letter from hospital.

To receive reimbursement, submit the following documents to Maccabi:

- End of treatment letter signed by the doctor, detailing all the treatments, costs and date of each treatment.
- Original receipt and invoice.
- The documents can be submitted on the Maccabi Online application or website. If necessary, the documents can also be submitted electronically at the clinic, or sent via registered mail to the clinic.

Links:

[Maccabi-dent clinics](#)

[Dental clinics that work with Maccabi.](#)

[How to submit a reimbursement request on the website or application](#)

Wishing you the best of health,

