Novel Approaches and Strategies to Salivary Gland Radioprotection

Guest Editor

Prof. Dr. Ziyad S. Haidar
Universidad de los Andes, Chile
zhaidar@uandes.cl

Message from the Guest Editor

Dear Colleagues,

Saliva has a critical role in the maintenance of oral, dental and general health and well-being. Alteration(s) in the amount/quantity and/or quality of secreted saliva may induce the development of several oro-dental variations, thereby negatively-impacting overall quality of life. Diverse factors may affect the process of saliva production and quantity/quality of secretion, including medications, systemic or local pathologies and/or reversible/irreversible damage. Indeed, chemo- and/or radio-therapy, particularly, in cases of head and neck cancer, for example, are well-documented to induce serious damage and dysfunction to the radio-sensitive salivary gland tissue, resulting in hypo-salivation, xerostomia (dry mouth) as well as numerous other adverse intra-/extra-oral, medical and quality-of-life issues. Although a single governing mechanism of radiation-induced salivary gland tissue damage and dysfunction has not been yet elucidated, the potential for a synergy in radio-protection (mainly, and possible -reparation) via a combinatorial approach of mechanistically distinct strategies, has been suggested and explored over the years. This is, undoubtfully, in parallel to the ongoing efforts in improving the precision, safety and efficacy of radiotherapy protocols/outcomes, as well as in developing new technological and pharmaceutical alternatives, topics covered in this Special Issue.

Prof. Dr. Ziyad S. Haidar
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