

# **Mandibular Osteoradionecrosis**

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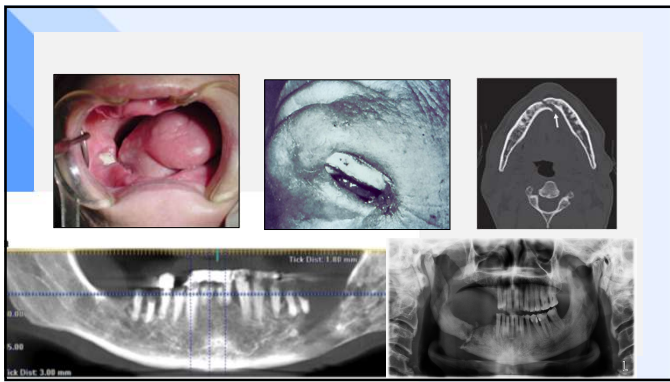
**Dick Clarke, CHT**

## Mandibular Osteoradionecrosis Review & Update

Primary Training in Hyperbaric Medicine  
Columbia, South Carolina

“Late radiation tissue injury is a sign of success”

Sanders M, Dische S.  
2002 ESTRO Meeting, Prague



Radiation tissue injury; “non-target” tissues

**Acute effects:** DNA damage, cell death-rapidly proliferating cells  
self-limiting +/- RT pause

**Late effects:** chronic oxidative stress  
dose-dependent > complex wounds/organ loss

“consequential vs. generic”

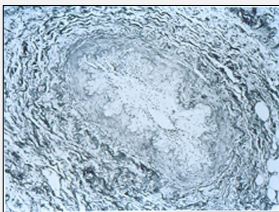
(3 - 7,400 cGy range)	No. Cases
< 5,000 cGy	5
5 - 6,000 cGy	24
6 - 7,000 cGy	33
> 7,000 cGy	42

90% traumatically-induced

Dose of RT (Gy)	Patients (percentage)
<40	8 (8.8)
40.1 - 45.0	5 (5.5)
45.1 - 50.0	4 (4.4)
50.1 - 55.0	5 (5.5)
55.1 - 60.0	15 (16.5)
≥60	54 (59.3)

**CLINICAL ARTICLES**

**Osteoradionecrosis: A New Concept of Its Pathophysiology**  
Robert E. Marx, MD



**Marx RE, J Oral Maxillofac Surg 1983;41:283-288**

**CLINICAL ARTICLES**

**A New Concept in the Treatment of Osteoradionecrosis**  
Robert E. Marx, MD

**Marx ORN Protocol**

- Stage I. HBO as primary therapy
- Stage II. Indication for surgery post-HBO = sequestrectomy
- Stage III. Mandible resection/fixation
- Stage III-R. Mandible reconstruction

**Marx RE, J Oral Maxillofac Surg 1983;41:351-357**

**CLASSIFICATION METHODS AND STAGING SYSTEMS FOR OSTEOADIONECROSIS OF THE MANDIBLE**

Investigator	Classification Method	Staging System
Marx RE	A new concept in the treatment of osteoradionecrosis. <i>J Oral Maxillofac Surg</i> 1983;41:351-7	Stage I: 30 days of HBO used to attain mucosa recovery Stage II: Grade 1 non-exposures who need functional sequestrectomy Stage III: Grade 2 non-exposures who need bone resection Stage III-R: An additional 30 days of HBO given to patients who needed a bone graft
Coffin F	The incidence and management of osteoradionecrosis of the jaws following head and neck radiotherapy. <i>Br J Radiol</i> 1976;56:851-7	Minor: Small sequestra that may separate spontaneously over several weeks Major: Bone necrosis extending to the entire thickness of the jaw, pathologic fracture sometimes present
Norton ME	Osteoradionecrosis: a study of the incidence in the North West of England. <i>Br J Oral Maxillofac Surg</i> 1986;24:323-31	Minor: Bone exposure with ulceration and a history of spontaneously resolving bony sequestra Moderate: Small sequestra but in nature and resolving spontaneously Large area of exposed bone and sequestra; bone fracture and fistula
Epslein JB, et al	Osteoradionecrosis: clinical experience and a proposal for classification. <i>J Oral Maxillofac Surg</i> 1987;45:106-10	Stage I: Resolved/healed, with or without pathologic fracture Stage II: Chronic/persistent non-aggressive, with or without pathologic fracture Stage III: Active/progressive, with or without pathologic fracture
Uken ML, et al	Osteoradionecrosis reconstruction using microvascular composite free flaps. <i>Arch Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg</i> 1995;123:733-744	Based upon anatomic, functional and aesthetic considerations ORN as a function of location within mandible, symphysis, body, angle and condyle
Glazman C, Gray WB	Radiation necrosis of the mandible: a retrospective analysis of the incidence and risk factors. <i>Radiat Oncol</i> 1991;36:94-100	Stage 1: Bone exposure without signs of infection and persisting for at least 1 month Stage 2: Bone exposure with infection or sequestra and/or a satisfactory result Stage 3: Bone necrosis treated with mandibular resection with a satisfactory result Stage 4: Bone necrosis treated with mandibular resection with a satisfactory result Stage 5: Death due to ORN
Chayman L	Clinical techniques in oral and maxillofacial surgery: part two. Management of dental extractions in	Type I: Preexisting with loose type upon intact gingiva or mucosa

**Treatment of osteoradionecrosis: a protocol without hyperbaric oxygen therapy**  
*J Oral Maxillofac Surg* 2002;55:275-82

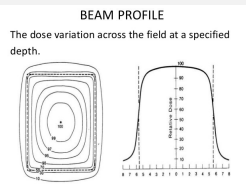
Investigator	Classification Method	Staging System
Wang RH, et al	Conservative management of osteoradionecrosis. <i>Oral Surg Oral Med Oral Pathol Oral Radiol Endod</i> 1997;84:19-22	Type II: Bone exposure with secondary contamination; an aggressive form Stage 1: Bone exposure resulting from tumor necrosis where tumor death results in a loss of soft tissue coverage Stage 2: Bone exposure as a consequence of tumor recurrence Stage 3: Bone exposure resultant from oral surgical (surgical flap operations) or other dental interventions including dental treatment Stage 4: Bone exposure de novo without apparent cause aside from radiation exposure
Stovro G, Boyven M	Mandibular osteoradionecrosis: clinical behavior and diagnostic aspects. <i>Oral Oncology</i> 2002;25:378-84	Stage 0: Mucosa defect only Stage I: Radiological evidence of necrotic bone with intact mucosa Stage II: Positive histologic finding, with detached bone intraorally Stage III: Exposure of the necrotic bone, skin fistula and infection
Schwartz HC, Kagan ML	Osteoradionecrosis of the mandible: scientific basis for clinical staging. <i>Am J Clin Oncol</i> 2002;25:168-72	Stage I: Superficial involvement of the mandible only Stage II: Localized involvement of the mandible, with or without soft tissue necrosis Stage III: Diffuse involvement of the mandible, with or without soft tissue necrosis
Notari F, et al	Management of mandibular osteoradionecrosis: corresponding to the severity of osteoradionecrosis and the method of radiotherapy. <i>Head Neck</i> 2002;24:238-46	Stage I: ORN confined to alveolar bone Stage II: ORN limited to the alveolar bone and/or above the level of the inferior alveolar canal Stage III: ORN under the lower part of the inferior alveolar canal, with fistula or bone fracture
Tsai CL, et al	Osteoradionecrosis and radiation due to the mandible in patients with esophageal cancer. <i>Int J Radiat Oncol Biol Phys</i> 2001;50:435-20	Stage I: Minimal bone exposure with conservative management only Stage II: Minor debridement required Stage III: HBO needed Stage IV: Major surgery needed

**Management of mandibular osteoradionecrosis corresponding to the severity of osteoradionecrosis and the method of radiotherapy.**  
*Head Neck* 2002;24:238-46

Investigator	Classification Method	Staging System
Karagouglu DS, et al	Management of mandibular osteoradionecrosis corresponding to the severity of osteoradionecrosis and the method of radiotherapy. <i>Head Neck</i> 2002;24:238-46	Stage 0: Bone exposure more than 1 month, no distinct changes on imaging Stage 1: Bone exposure with no distinct changes on imaging, with or without symptoms Stage 2: Bone exposure with distinct changes on imaging, with no involvement of the lower maxillary border Stage 3: Necrotic bone involving the lower border of the mandible
Lyon A, et al	Osteoradionecrosis - a review of current concepts in defining the extent of the disease and a new classification proposal. <i>Br J Oral Maxillofac Surg</i> 2014;52:382-5	Stage 1: <1.5 cm length of bone affected, asymptomatic Stage 2: >1.5 cm length of bone affected, involving fracture or the inferior dental foramen Stage 3: >1.5 cm length of bone affected, symptomatic, with no other features Stage 4: >1.5 cm length of bone affected, bone fracture and involving inferior dental foramen or fistula
Bony/soft tissue	Retrospective analysis of osteoradionecrosis of the mandible: proposing a recent criteria classification and staging systems. <i>Int J Oral Maxillofac Surg</i> 2015;44:1547-1557	<b>Classification</b> B0: No distinct changes on post-radiotherapy imaging on radiography, but patients harboring acute signs: Ulcer, mucositis, symptoms, pain, exposure of teeth B1: Maximal diameter of the lesion on radiography <2.0 cm B2: Maximal diameter of the lesion on radiography >2.0 cm B3: Pathologic fracture <b>Mucosal and skin integrity</b> S0: Intact mucosal and external skin fistula S1: Intact mucosal and external skin defect, through and through defect <b>Conservative therapy</b> Stage I: Segmental resection and primary closure Stage II: Marginal resection without reconstruction, or segmental resection combined with osteoradionecrosis flap reconstruction as an additional soft tissue flap should be used in patients with an osteonecrotic fistula Stage III: Segmental resection combined with osteoradionecrosis flap reconstruction; an additional soft tissue flap should be used in patients with an osteonecrotic fistula

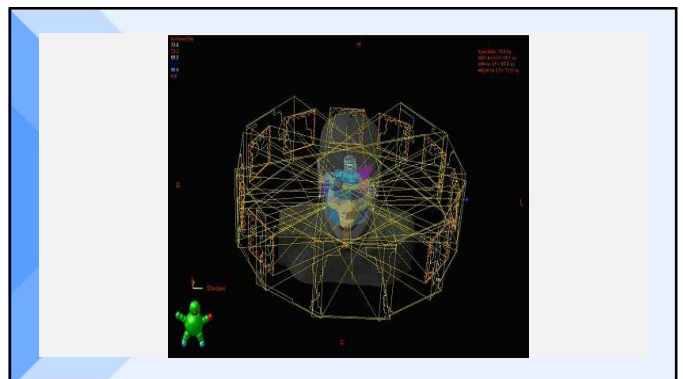
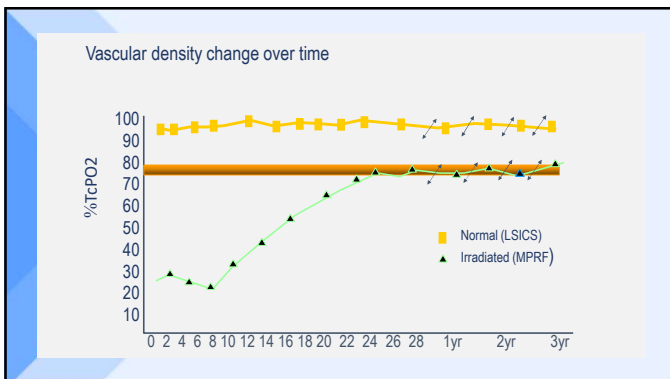
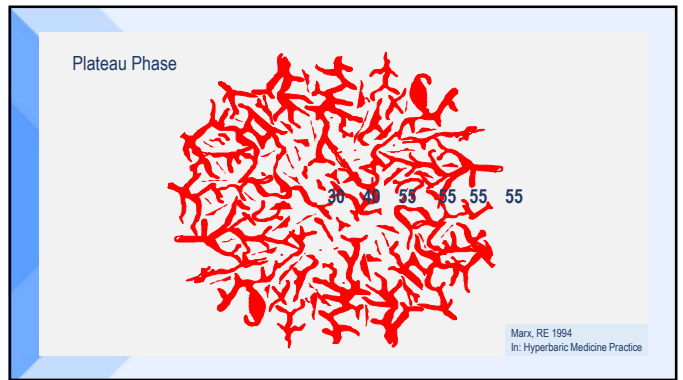
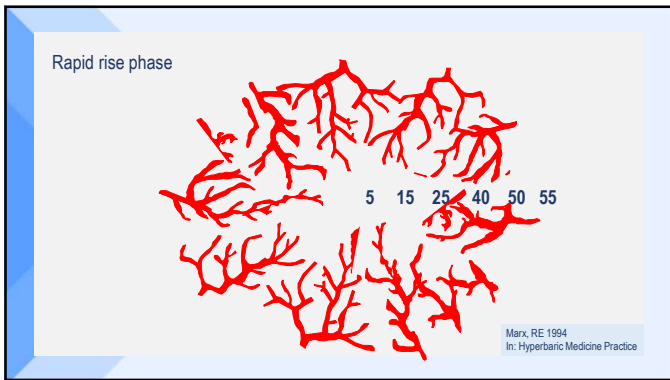
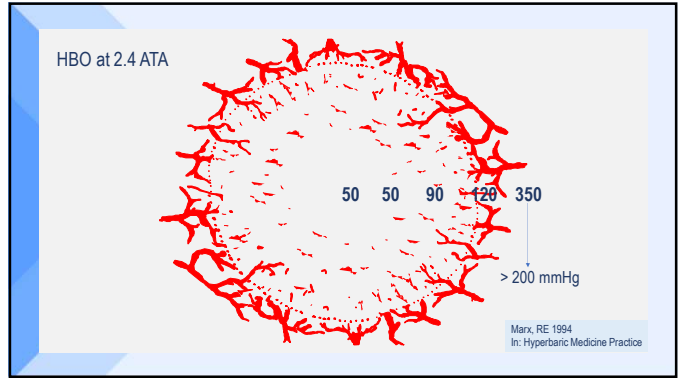
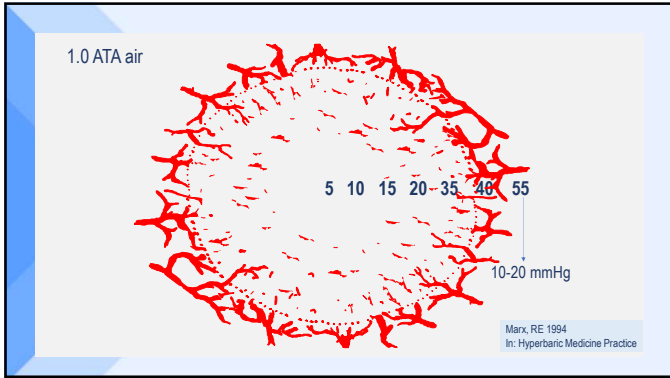
**Radiation damaged tissue as a unique wound**

**BEAM PROFILE**  
 The dose variation across the field at a specified depth.



**Regulation of wound-healing  $\alpha_{v}\beta_{3}$  angiogenesis—Effect of oxygen gradients and inspired oxygen concentration**  
David R. Kraybill, MD, PhD, et al.

**Knighton DR, et al. Surgery 1981;90(2)**

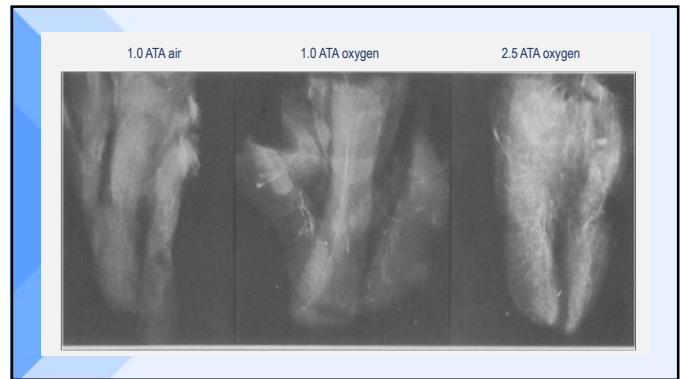


### Micro-angiogenic vascular density

	Normobaric Air (N=7)	Normobaric Oxygen (N=14)	Hyperbaric Oxygen (N=14)
Maximum VDE	18	19	99
Minimum VDE	6	6	78
Mean VDE	13	13	93

Normobaric air vs. Normobaric O<sub>2</sub>: p < 0.89  
 Normobaric O<sub>2</sub> vs. Hyperbaric O<sub>2</sub>: p < 0.01  
 Normobaric air vs. Hyperbaric O<sub>2</sub>: p < 0.01

Marx RE, et al. 1990  
 Am J Surgery; 160



**Effect of hyperbaric oxygen treatment on oxygen tension and vascular capacity in irradiated skin and mucosa**  
 Svalestad J, et al. Int J Oral Maxillo Surg 2014;43

20 pts hx H/N RT 50-70 Gy,  
 ORN or ORN prophylaxis

Randomly allocated HBO vs. no-HBO

Skin & mucosal tissue perfusion measurements  
 Transcutaneous oximetry & Doppler flowmetry

pre-HBO & 6 months post-HBO  
 controls 6 months apart

### tcpO<sub>2</sub> measurements pre/post HBO vs. controls

		HBO group			Controls	
		Baseline	3 months	6 months	Baseline	6 months
Forehead	Basal	39.8 +/-15.75	39.87 +/-11.25	41.3 +/-10.5	41.3 +/-12	43.6 +/-10.5
	O <sub>2</sub>	140.3 +/-71.3	135.8 +/-37.5	137.3 +/-38.3	127.5 +/-55.5	113.3 +/-39.8
Cheek	Basal	29.3 +/-13.5	42.8 +/-15.7 *	42.8 +/-7.5 *	31.5 +/-9	29.3 +/-11.3
	O <sub>2</sub>	105.0 +/-43.5	150.85 +/-63.8 *	148.5 +/-48.8 *	105.0 +/-37.5	95.3 +/-34.5
Intercostal	Basal	54.0 +/-13.5	54.8 +/-15	59.3 +/-9.75	64.5 +/-18	62.3 +/-14.3
	O <sub>2</sub>	148.2 +/-52.5	156.8 +/-52.5	156.8 +/-43.5	116.3 +/-33	145.5 +/-45.0

\* P < 0.05 compared to baseline

**Effect of hyperbaric oxygen treatment on irradiated oral mucosa: microvessel density**  
 Svalestad J, et al. Int J Oral Maxillo Surg 2015;44

Same 20 pts hx H/N

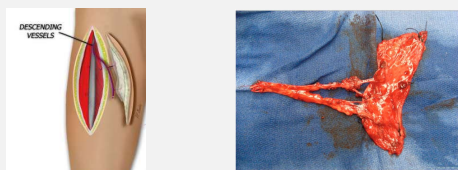
Buccal oral mucosa tissue samples

pre-HBO & 6 months post-HBO  
 controls 6 months apart

### Vascularization & cell proliferation

	HBO Group			Controls			
	Baseline	6 months	p	Baseline	6 months	p	
<b>Blood vessels</b>							
Sub-epithelial	MVD	45.4 +/- 13.9	98.0 +/- 15.9	0.002	45.6 +/- 15.7	49.3 +/- 10.5	NS
	MVA	1.5 +/- 0.6	4.4 +/- 1.9	0.003	1.5 +/- 0.6	1.6 +/- 0.5	NS
Deeper connective tissue	MVD	30.4 +/- 10.1	45.1 +/- 16.4	0.01	28.1 +/- 9.6	34.4 +/- 7.8	NS
	MVA	2.5 +/- 1.3	3.7 +/- 1.3	0.041	2.2 +/- 0.9	2.7 +/- 1.4	NS
<b>Lymph vessels</b>							
Sub-epithelial	MVD	18.3 +/- 8.1	36.1 +/- 12.6	0.002	19.4 +/- 6.2	16.9 +/- 8.8	NS
	MVA	1.3 +/- 0.7	2.7 +/- 1.8	0.019	1.2 +/- 0.6	1.5 +/- 0.7	NS





**DESCENDING VESSELS**

50/52 MORN cases successfully managed  
 2 progressed to fibular free flap  
 Simple, reliable, low risk  
 Low donor site morbidity - ease of harvest

### Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy

**Standard procedure:** Pressures often vary between 2.0 & 2.5 ATA for 60-120 minutes once or twice daily for 30-60 sessions

**Contraindications:** Tumor recurrence; history of HBO complications

**Complications:** Oxygen recurrence (theoretical, not substantiated by evidence); visual disturbance; barotrauma, oxygen toxicity

**Special points:** Evidence for HBO treatment & prevention of ORN mixed. Smaller uncontrolled studies have shown recovery with HBO alone or combined with surgery, however, few randomized controlled trials exist. The first showed ORN prevention for dental procedures. Subsequent RCTs have not supported HBO treatment or prevention efficacy. Cochrane Review suggested moderate-quality evidence for increased likelihood to achieve mucosal coverage & prevent post-op breakdown.

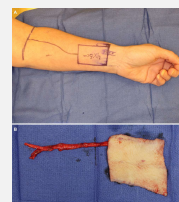
**Cost-effectiveness:** Expensive (often more expensive than surgery given number of visits required and cost of equipment/staffing).

**Meleca JB, et al. Curr Treat Options in Oncol 2021;22**

### Fasciocutaneous Flaps for Refractory Intermediate Stage Osteoradionecrosis of the Mandible - Is It Time for a Shift in Management?

**Marx pioneered HBO, no RCTs have replicated his results**  
 "Appears little benefit to addition of HBO for advanced stages"

**Concept of RT-induced fibro-atrophic theory**  
 Use of PENTO/PENTOCLO promising - better data required



**Gigliotti J, et al. J Oral Maxillofac Surg 2021;79**

### Osteoradionecrosis: Exposing the Evidence Not the Bone

**Andrew J. Frankart, MD, Michael J. Frankart, DMS, Brian Gonzalez, MD, Julia L. Tang, MD, Patrick S. Krishna, DDS, and Vinita Talwar, MD, PhD**

**"The microvascular osteo-myo-cutaneous free flap, such as free fibular flap, has evolved to become a workhorse ..."**

**"Conservative management including the use of pentoxifylline-vit. E should be attempted before surgical procedures"**



**Frankart AJ, et al. Int J Rad Oncol Biol Phys 2021;109(5)**

### Oral Oncology

**Safety of freezone reconstruction of the maxilla with a CAD/CAM designed titanium device: The triple cohort study**

**18 pts over 5 yrs**

**Primary outcomes at 1 yr. achieved in 14/18 (78%)**

- absence of extrusion
- decrease/cessation of pain
- stability/increase in mouth opening
- resumption of oral feeding
- absence of fracture/displacement/screw loosening

**MRONJ - 10 ORN - 2 SCC - 2 Other - 4**



**Bedogni A, et al. J Oral Oncology 2021;112**

### Marx Stage II:

**Stage I "non-responder"**

**Local surgical debridement or resection**

**10 HBO treatments post-operatively**

**Marx Stage III/III-R:**

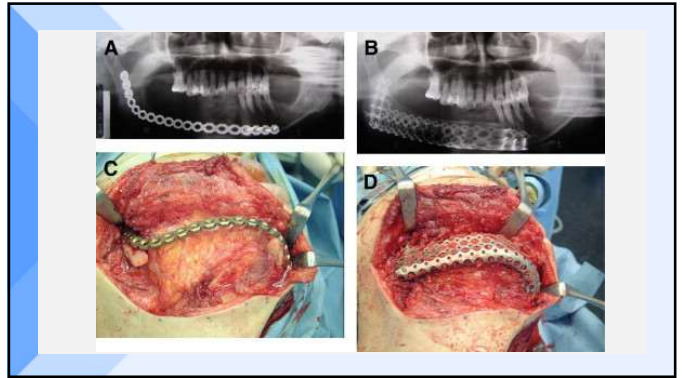
- Extensive mucosal loss & more necrotic bone
- Soft tissue fistula; pathologic fracture; bone resorption; Stage II non-responder

Following initial 30 treatments:

- Partial jaw resection; fixation; primary closure of any fistulae
- Resection of RT damaged soft tissue & skin flap repair
- Ten additional treatments

10-12 weeks after resection > formal reconstruction

- Titanium fixation plate; titanium/Dacron tray-filled cancellous bone chips
- +/- ten additional treatments



Prospective study; complications within irradiated soft tissue > 6,400 cGy

Wound Infections	N	Minor	Major	Total	
Non-HBO	80	6 (7.5%)	13 (16%)	19 (24%)	P = 0.001
HBO	80	3 (3.5%)	2 (2.5%)	5 (6%)	

Wound Dehiscence	N	Minor	Major	Total	
Non-HBO	80	12 (15%)	26 (33%)	38 (48%)	P = 0.001
HBO	80	6 (7.5%)	3 (3.5%)	9 (11%)	

Delayed Healing	N	Minor	Major	Total	
Non-HBO	80	44 (55%)			P = 0.005
HBO	80	9 (11%)			

Marx, RE 1994  
In: Hyperbaric Medicine Practice

Journal of Clinical Oncology | ORIGINAL REPORT | 211-217

**Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy for Radiation-Induced Osteonecrosis of the Jaw: A Randomized, Placebo-Controlled, Double-Blind Trial From the ORSN6 Study Group**

**Study design**

- 134 consecutive ORN pts assessed
- 12 centers; 1997-2001
- 68 randomized & analyzed
- 31 HBO - 37 sham
- Study stopped at 2<sup>nd</sup> interim analysis
- HBO 19% healed
- Sham 32% healed
- "Need for surgery = HBO failure"

Annane D, et al. J Clinical Oncology 2004;22(24)

ORN: Marx RE, UHM 2019;46(4)

**Hyperbaric oxygen is still needed in the management and prevention of mandibular osteonecrosis in the irradiated patient**

Marx RE, UHM 2019;46(4)

**ABSTRACT**

**OBJECTIVE:** The purpose of this study was to evaluate the efficacy of hyperbaric oxygen (HBO) in the management and prevention of mandibular osteonecrosis (ON) in the irradiated patient. The study was a prospective, randomized, controlled trial. The study included 134 consecutive patients with ON who were assessed at 12 centers between 1997 and 2001. The patients were randomized to receive either HBO (n = 31) or sham HBO (n = 37). The primary endpoint was the percentage of patients who were healed or had a partial response to treatment. The secondary endpoint was the percentage of patients who required surgery. The results of the study showed that HBO was significantly more effective than sham HBO in the management and prevention of ON. The HBO group had a significantly higher percentage of patients who were healed or had a partial response to treatment compared to the sham HBO group. The HBO group also had a significantly lower percentage of patients who required surgery compared to the sham HBO group. The results of this study support the use of HBO in the management and prevention of ON in the irradiated patient.

Clarke R, UHM 2019;46(4)

ORN: Marx RE, UHM 2019;46(4)

**Synchronous Reconstruction of a Total Mandibulotomy Defect With a Single Fibula Osteostatic Free Flap**

Tursun R, et al. J Oral Maxillofac Surg 2018;76

**ABSTRACT**

**OBJECTIVE:** The purpose of this study was to evaluate the efficacy of a single fibula osteostatic free flap in the synchronous reconstruction of a total mandibulotomy defect. The study was a retrospective analysis of 10 patients who underwent synchronous reconstruction of a total mandibulotomy defect with a single fibula osteostatic free flap. The patients were treated between 2010 and 2015. The primary endpoint was the percentage of patients who were healed or had a partial response to treatment. The secondary endpoint was the percentage of patients who required surgery. The results of the study showed that a single fibula osteostatic free flap was significantly more effective than a traditional fibula free flap in the synchronous reconstruction of a total mandibulotomy defect. The single fibula osteostatic free flap group had a significantly higher percentage of patients who were healed or had a partial response to treatment compared to the traditional fibula free flap group. The single fibula osteostatic free flap group also had a significantly lower percentage of patients who required surgery compared to the traditional fibula free flap group. The results of this study support the use of a single fibula osteostatic free flap in the synchronous reconstruction of a total mandibulotomy defect.



**Study design**

97 ORN pts randomized  
12 centers; 2008-2017

Required removal necrotic bone  
"some pts reconstructed"

Randomly assigned per ITT  
51 Surg + HBO vs. 46 Surg

Primary outcome: ORN healing 1 yr.  
70% Surg + HBO vs. 51% Surg

"HBO did not significantly improve healing..."  
"This effect not statistically significant"

Forner L, et al. Radiation & Oncology 2022;166

**Modern management mandibular reconstruction**

**Mandibular Reconstruction Using the Free Vascularized Fibula Graft: An Overview of Different Modifications**

George Richard, Robin Schmitz, David B. Thores, Dorian Indant\*

**INTRODUCTION**

The reconstruction of the mandible is a complex procedure... The fibula free flap is a versatile and reliable option for mandibular reconstruction... It provides a long, straight bone segment with a vascularized soft tissue envelope... The fibula free flap can be modified in several ways to address specific patient needs... These modifications include the use of the fibula free flap as a free flap, as a microvascular free flap, or as a free flap with a microvascular anastomosis... The fibula free flap is a versatile and reliable option for mandibular reconstruction... It provides a long, straight bone segment with a vascularized soft tissue envelope... The fibula free flap can be modified in several ways to address specific patient needs... These modifications include the use of the fibula free flap as a free flap, as a microvascular free flap, or as a free flap with a microvascular anastomosis...

Kokosis G, et al. Arch Plastic Surg 2016;43(1)

**Prevention and Management of Osteoradionecrosis in Patients With Head and Neck Cancer Treated With Radiation Therapy: ISOO-MASCC-ASCO Guideline**

\*The use of hyperbaric oxygen in prevention and management of ORN remains largely unjustified, with limited evidence to support its practice\*

Peterson DE, et al. J Clinical Oncology 2024;May 1

**Managing Mandibular Osteoradionecrosis**

Michael A. Fritz, MD, Ekshar Arora, MD, Sara W. Lee, MD, Eric C. Saper, MD, Daniel J. Grier, MD, Peter J. Clark, MD, Patrick J. Byrne, MD, and Brandon L. Poretsky, MD

**Work-up (History of Therapy)**

- Stage I: Clinical Exam, CT, MRI, PET/CT
- Stage II: Pathologic Exam, Biopsy, PET/CT
- Stage III: Pathologic Exam, Biopsy, PET/CT
- Stage IV: Pathologic Exam, Biopsy, PET/CT
- Stage V: Pathologic Exam, Biopsy, PET/CT

**Close Surveillance**

Close surveillance is recommended for patients with early-stage disease... The goal of close surveillance is to detect any progression of disease early enough to allow for timely intervention... Close surveillance includes regular clinical exams, imaging, and patient education...

Fritz MA, et al. Otolaryn Head Neck Surg 2024;00:1-13

Where does HBO currently stand for ORN?

Stage I - localized


- Four decades clinical practice experience c/w Marx protocol
- Widely, although not exclusively reimbursed
- Not supported by efficacy/effectiveness evidence
- PENTOCLO <100 reported cases; no efficacy evidence
- Recent limited reporting of periosteal & ALT/FFF flaps promising

*Weight of existing evidence supports HBO \*\**

\*\* Cochrane Database of Systemic Reviews, 2016

Stage III 'advanced'

- Introduction of Marx Protocol (1983) mandible reconstruction
  - ~ HBO reduced failure rates; optimized healing
  - ~ essential standard of care ~ two decades
- Advent of microvascular surgery another step change
- Single-stage radical resection & myo-cutaneous free fibular flap
  - ~ now considered "gold standard" for advanced ORN since 2000
  - ~ HBO occasionally employed for post-op complications
- Marx two-stage protocol in absence of microvascular capabilities



74 pts randomized to HBO or PCN

All high risk > 6,000 cGy



135 teeth extracted in 37 PCN pts  
~ 29.9% unhealed sockets at 6 months

156 teeth extracted in 37 HBO pts  
~ 5.6% unhealed sockets at 6 months

Marx RE, et al. JADA 1985;111:49-54

ORN prophylaxis protocol

- Basis for 20 pre-op. procedures
  - angiogenesis plateau
- Basis for 10 post-op. procedures
  - reduces dehiscence by promoting collagen production along incision lines

144 pts randomized; HBO vs. no HBO

- 10 facilities
- 55 received HBO + surgery
- 66 received surgery
- Mean RT dose 6,300 cGy
- Blinded assessors
- Trail halted at interim analysis
- Data relates to conformal/IMRT

Shaw, R.J., et al. Int J Rad Oncol Bio Phys 2019