

TABLE 8-1

## APPROACHES TO MANAGING LARYNGEAL CANCER SYMPTOMS AND SIDE EFFECTS

SYMPTOM	APPROACHES TO MANAGEMENT
Inflammation of the mouth after radiation (mucositis)	Anesthetic mouthwash for pain
	Analgesic medications for pain
	Baking soda or antifungal mouthwash for prevention of infection
	Anti-inflammatory medications for swelling
Dry mouth after radiation (xerostomia)	Salivary substitutes or stimulants
	Hydration and lubrication
	Dental consultation for prevention of cavities
Skin reactions after radiation (dermatitis)	Moisturizer before radiation
	Ointments after radiation
	Loose-fitting clothing around the neck and affected area
Swallowing difficulties (dysphagia and odynophagia)	Short-term high-dose corticosteroids for nausea and appetite loss
	Analgesic medications for pain
	Artificial nutrition and hydration
Communication difficulties	Alternative communication methods (see Chapter 5)
	Speech and language pathology consultations
Pain	Analgesic medications for pain from tissue damage
	Anticonvulsants, antidepressants, or local anesthetics for pain from nerve damage
	Complementary and alternative pain management (e.g., massage, acupuncture)
Psychiatric needs	Early psychiatric consultation (even before starting therapy)
	Antidepressants and psychotherapy for depression; support groups for anxiety

requires fluoride therapy, preventive maintenance, and judicious interventions (Ballonoff et al., 2006).

### Skin Reactions

Patients with LC may experience various degrees of dermatitis and soft-tissue damage to the skin of their head and neck within the treatment field. This damage ensues because radiation inadvertently targets the rapidly dividing cells of the epidermis, sebaceous (oil) glands, and hair follicles, which results in an inflammatory response to tissue injury (Fogh & Yom, 2014). The exposed field may become edematous before ultimately blistering, ulcerating, and sloughing (Goldstein et al., 2008). Moisturizer can be applied prophylactically to prevent severe reactions from occurring. Unscented topical ointments, aloe, or corticosteroid cream can also be helpful for lower-grade dermatitis, but patients should avoid products that contain alcohol, menthol, or