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Review on gastrointestinal toxicity of radiation therapy

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Background: Gastrointestinal toxicity can occur following irradiation of thoracic, abdominal, or pelvic malignancies whenever normal gastrointestinal structures are located within the radiation therapy field. These toxicities can limit the maximum dose of radiation therapy and chemotherapy, and thus may limit the efficacy of treatment. The gastrointestinal side effects of radiation therapy include early (acute) toxicity, such as diarrhea and nausea that are experienced during or shortly after the completion of a course of therapy. In addition, late effects may be observed months to years after radiation therapy. These late reactions include ulceration, stricture formation, and bowel obstruction.

Methods: Data were collected as review study.

Results and conclusions: In this review study we explain the adverse effects of radiation on the esophagus, stomach, small and large intestine, anus, and liver.

Keywords: Gastrointestinal toxicity, radiation therapy