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Title: Hyperbaric oxygen as an adjunctive treatment for delayed radiation injury of the chest wall: a retrospective review of twenty-three cases

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Abstract: Since 1979, 23 cases of radiation-induced chest wall necrosis have been treated in the Hyperbaric Medicine Departments of Southwest Texas Methodist Hospital and the Nix Hospital, San Antonio, Texas. Eight cases involved soft tissue only. Six of eight (75%) patients with soft tissue involvement healed without requiring surgical debridement, although four patients (50%) did have flaps or grafts. Fifteen patients had bony and soft tissue necrosis. Eight of these patients (53%) resolved with adjunctive hyperbaric oxygen (HBO), but all required aggressive surgical debridement including skeletal resection. Four (27%) had reconstructive flaps as well. Six patients (40%) with bony necrosis who had either no or incomplete debridement failed to heal. Three patients (13%) (two soft tissue and one bony) were found to have residual tumor during HBO and were discontinued from treatment. HBO is an effective adjunctive therapy for soft tissue chest-wall, radiation-induced necrosis, but must be coupled with appropriate debridement to include surgical removal of all necrotic bone to ensure a successful outcome of bony plus soft tissue necrosis.

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