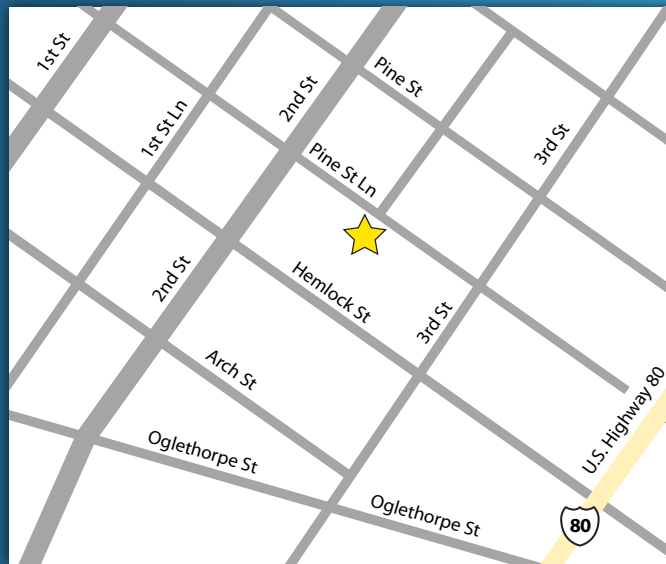




### About the ENT Center of Central Georgia

The ENT Center of Central Georgia brings together the very best physicians and support staff dedicated to providing you an exceptional patient experience. In our pursuit to provide excellence in medical treatment, we listen to our patients and focus on their symptoms. We develop individualized treatment plans based on your unique needs and treat you like we would a family member. Whether you have hearing problems, allergies, dizziness, sinus infections, snoring, or any other ear, nose, and throat related problem, we can help.

**For more information, contact one of the elite health care professionals at The ENT Center of Central Georgia today: 1-800-253-8953**

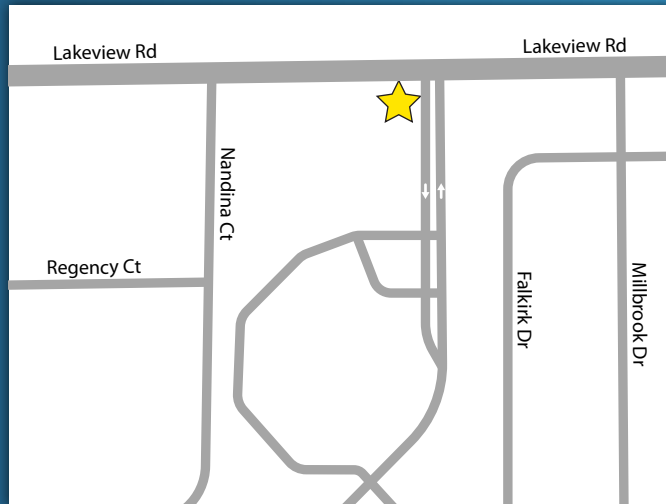


#### Macon Office

540 Hemlock Street  
Macon, GA 31201

Phone: (478) 743-8953

Fax: (478) 743-1963



#### Warner Robins Office

6084 Lakeview Road  
Warner Robins, GA 31088

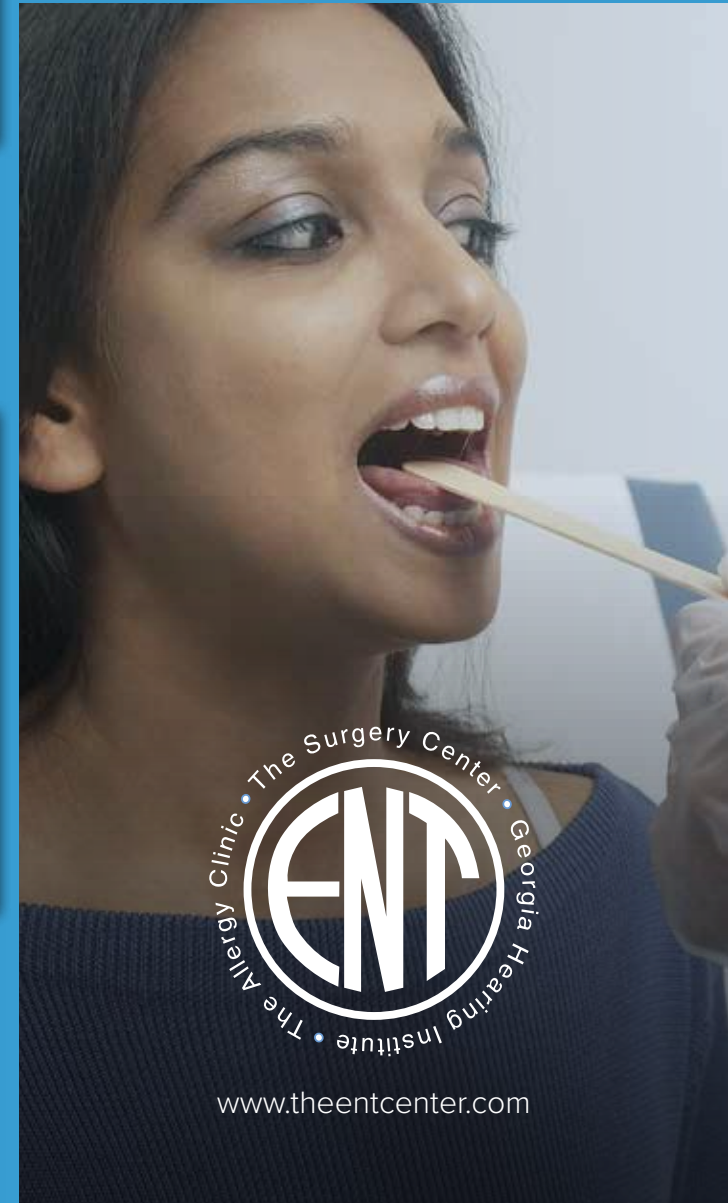
Phone: (478) 333-2235

Fax: (478) 333-2238

# The ENT Center of Central Georgia

## Our Doctors Explain:

### MOUTH PROBLEMS CAUSED BY RADIATION TREATMENT TO THE HEAD & NECK



[www.theentcenter.com](http://www.theentcenter.com)



## What Are the Symptoms of Mouth Problems Caused by Radiation?

Radiation treatment to the head and neck can materialize in the mouth in myriad ways, from general soreness to structural issues to the jaw. Some of these symptoms may be temporary, while others can be permanent.

These symptoms include:

- Dry mouth (xerostomia)
- Increased tooth decay
- Damage to the jawbones that causes the bone to die (osteoradionecrosis)
- Changes in taste
- Mouth sores or ulcers (mucositis)
- Spasms and muscle contractions of the muscles that open the mouth (trismus)

## How Are Mouth Problems Caused by Radiation Diagnosed?

Due to the many different causes of mouth problems correlating with both radiation and a person's specific type of cancer, a diagnosis will likely involve your doctor taking a complete medical history, including physical and dental exams, alongside x-rays of your teeth.

## What Are Mouth Problems Caused by Radiation?

Radiation to the head and neck area can cause temporary and permanent changes to the mouth, otherwise known as oral complications or mouth problems.

Due to radiation therapy's slowing, stoppage and destruction of new cell growth, which encompasses all your body's cells, not just cancerous ones, normal cells in the lining of the mouth have difficulty aiding your body's ability to repair oral tissue.

This type of therapy also disrupts the balance of healthy bacteria in the mouth and causes changes in the salivary glands, which can lead to mouth sores, infections and tooth decay.



## How Are Mouth Problems Caused by Radiation Treated?

Treatment for mouth problems caused by radiation starts with recognizing the side effects of your therapy and taking proactive measures to minimize changes and possible risks of severe health problems.

Outside of general daily oral care—brushing and flossing consistently, using toothpaste with fluoride, visiting the dentist every six months, etc.—to mitigate dental decay and infection, here are some ways to treat some common issues.

If you develop a sore mouth, try drinking plenty of water between meals to keep your mouth and body well hydrated and moist, use a soft-bristled toothbrush when brushing or rinsing the mouth with baking soda.

Otherwise, should you notice sores (ulcers), bleeding with patches or a white coating on your tongue, or more serious complications such as spasms or jaw pain, contact your doctor.