

WHAT IS DRY MOUTH?

Not having enough saliva, or spit to keep your mouth moist and comfortable.



1 in 5 seniors are affected by dry mouth

WHY can DRY MOUTH cause problems?

Dry mouth can lead to serious tooth decay and mouth infections!

WHAT CAUSES DRY MOUTH?

- Over 500 prescription medications such as antidepressants, antihistamines, diuretics, sedatives, and high blood pressure pills.
- Some diseases affect saliva production, such as diabetes, Parkinson's Disease, Sjogren's Syndrome, HIV/AIDS
- Cancer treatment: radiation therapy & chemotherapy
- Smoking
- Mouth breathing, dehydration
- Using mouth rinse with alcohol may make mouth feel dry

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

- Dry, irritated, cracked lips and/or corners of mouth
- Changes to tongue surface; cracked
- Trouble chewing, swallowing, eating, speaking; lips that stick to teeth or dentures
- Red gums that bleed easily
- Bad breath
- Stringy, thick saliva
- Problems wearing dentures
- Chalky white spots (early signs of a cavity)



WHAT TO DO:

Thorough daily mouth care

- Brush at least 2x a day using a soft toothbrush and toothpaste with fluoride; clean between teeth with floss or a proxabrush
- Use special dry mouth products (ie. Biotene)
- Other helpers: Prevident 5000 Plus toothpaste, alcohol-free mouthrinse

Add moisture

- Sip water often or suck on ice chips
- Moisturize mouth tissues with water-based moisturizer (e.g. gel, spray, lozenges)
- Rinse with Canada Dry Club Soda
- Use sugar-free or xylitol candies/gum to stimulate saliva flow
- Use a cool mist humidifier, especially at night

Professional care:

- Visit the dentist & dental hygienist regularly for care & advice
- Consult your physician to review current medications & find out if any changes can be made

AVOID:

- Toothpaste that contains sodium lauryl sulfate (most brands)
- Mouthrinses that contain alcohol
- Sweet sticky foods, sugar-containing candy/gum
- Spicy, acidic, or dry, bulky foods
- Alcohol and carbonated beverages
- Caffeine and tobacco
- Cinnamon or lemon flavoured candies or gum
- Lemon glycerin swabs



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