



AP ORAL MEDICINE

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## **COPING WITH DRY MOUTH**

Saliva helps with many things including lubrication, cleaning, taste, speech, digestion, teeth and gum protection amongst other things

Dry mouth can affect the way we eat in many ways. You may notice certain foods irritate your mouth; other food need lots of liquid to make them go down.

Dealing with Dry Mouth at Meal Times – Ways to Help with Chewing and Swallowing.

- ❖ Moisten foods with mayonnaise, sauces, gravies, yoghurt or salad dressing
- ❖ Try dipping dry foods into whatever you are drinking
- ❖ Soften or thin foods with skim milk, broth or water
- ❖ Use the food processor or blender to finely chop or liquefy foods
- ❖ Use a straw if it helps you swallow. Sip your drink while eating
- ❖ Gently floss and brush your teeth after meals
- ❖ Make sure you see your dentist regularly

### **IF IT HURTS TO EAT**

- ❖ Try smooth, soft creamy foods, like soups, macaroni cheese, mashed potatoes, casseroles, tender cooked vegetables, tinned fruits, pudding, cheesecake, ice-cream, and even tender cooked and simmered meats
- ❖ Drink high-calorie, cold liquids, such as milk shakes, instant breakfast drinks, or liquid nutritional supplements, for both calories and ease in eating
- ❖ Suck fruit juice and ice blocks, or other cold foods if it helps to reduce the pain

### **AVOID**

- ❖ Salty, acidic or spicy foods or carbonated drinks that prolong the pain
- ❖ Hot foods. Room temperature meals are easier to eat
- ❖ Hard, crunchy foods, such as tough or crisp meats, dry snack foods, crusty bread, popcorn, or nuts since can be irritating





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**OTHER THINGS TO AVOID**

- ❖ Don't drink too many sugared or caffeinated drinks. Caffeine may cause added dryness
- ❖ Don't drink too much alcohol – it can make the dry mouth worse
- ❖ Tobacco – it can irritate the lining of your mouth
- ❖ Mouthwashes that contain alcohol. They can be drying and irritating to your mouth
- ❖ Some over-the-counter medications such as antihistamines can make dryness worse

**You should see an Oral Medicine specialist initially to have the cause of your dry mouth properly diagnosed so that management can be better applied**

**DISCUSS ALL MEDICATION WITH YOUR SPECIALIST**

