

XEROSTOMIA (Dry Mouth)



Patient Information Handout

Definition: Xerostomia (pronounced “zero-sto’me-ah”) is the medical word for dry mouth due to decreased or absent saliva. This problem is quite common and is caused by a variety of medication conditions and medications.

***People with dry mouth are at a greatly increased risk
of developing dental cavities***

Helpful Hints:

- Stay hydrated – sip cool water or let ice chips melt in your mouth (don’t chew ice!)
- Use SUGAR FREE candy, gum and beverages to help moisturize the mouth. Look for products with Xylitol (a sweetener that does not cause cavities).
- Avoid acidic candies and foods as they may cause a sore mouth and contribute to cavities.
- Restrict caffeine – caffeine exacerbates xerostomia. Use caffeine-free tea and coffee.
- Use a humidifier in the bedroom at night to improve comfort while you sleep
- Excellent oral hygiene is imperative to prevent cavities and gum disease.
- See your dentist frequently as people with dry mouth are more prone to dental cavities and oral yeast infections. Report any unusual oral soreness or burning sensations.
- To help offset the increased cavity risk, use a high-strength fluoride toothpaste or mouth rinse (alcohol-free)