

# WHAT IS DRY MOUTH?

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

## Why can DRY MOUTH cause problems?

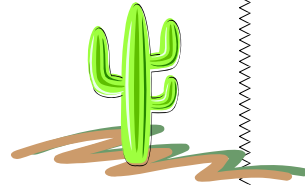
Dry mouth can lead to serious tooth decay and mouth infections!

### WHAT CAUSES DRY MOUTH?

- Over 400 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
- Alcohol use, smoking, mouth breathing & dehydration

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

- Dry, irritated, cracked lips, corners of mouth, tongue
- 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
- Many new cavities



### WHAT TO DO:

#### Thorough daily mouth care

- Brush at least twice a day using a toothpaste with fluoride; clean between teeth with floss or a proxabrush
- Use special dry mouth products, i.e. the Biotene product line
- Other helpers: Prevident 5000 Plus toothpaste, alcohol-free mouthrinse

#### Add moisture

- Sip water often or suck on ice chips: try a sports bottle
- Use a water-based lip lubricant (Labello, KY-Jelly, Oral Balance)
- Moisturize mouth tissues with artificial saliva sprays/gels (i.e. Biotene Oral Balance Mouth Moisturizer)
- Rinse with Canada Dry Club Soda
- Use sugar-free 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 the 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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