



# DRY MOUTH

Dry mouth (xerostomia) is a serious condition that can arise when there is a decrease in saliva flow in the mouth. Dry mouth is an important problem to address because it can put you at greater risk for cavities and oral infections, and lead to pain, discomfort, and difficulty swallowing.

## WHAT CAUSES DRY MOUTH?

### Dry mouth has been associated with:

- medication use (see below)
- radiation and chemotherapy
- dehydration
- diseases, such as Sjögren's syndrome and diabetes, and other chronic conditions
- salivary gland dysfunction
- smoking

## WHICH MEDICATIONS MAY CAUSE DRY MOUTH?

### The following is a list of medications that may produce dry mouth:

- blood pressure medication
- antidepressants and anti-anxiety medications
- decongestants and antihistamines
- pain relievers and sedatives
- Parkinson's disease medications
- certain medications delivered through inhalers (e.g., bronchodilators)

## WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT MY DRY MOUTH?

- Visit your oral health professional, such as your dental hygienist, for preventive oral care and to discuss ways to reduce the impact of dry mouth.
- Brush your teeth and mouth daily, and clean in between your teeth.
- Sip water frequently.
- Use sugar-free chewing gum and/or lozenges.
- Avoid foods and drinks that cause your mouth to dry (e.g., caffeine or spicy, acidic, and cinnamon-flavoured items).
- Use lip lubricants and salivary replacements.
- Schedule routine visits with your health care provider to closely monitor your health condition.
- Reduce or discontinue tobacco use.



**DENTAL  
HYGIENE  
CANADA**



THE CANADIAN DENTAL  
HYGIENISTS ASSOCIATION  
**CDHA  
ACHD**  
L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE  
DES HYGIÉNISTES DENTAIRE

[WWW.DENTALHYGIENECANADA.CA](http://WWW.DENTALHYGIENECANADA.CA)