



Dry Mouth (Xerostomia)

Causes of Dry Mouth:

- Certain prescription drugs
- Certain over-the-counter medications
- Tobacco
- Mouth breathing
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Alcohol
- Caffeine
- Spicy or salty foods
- Breathing unusually dry, cold, dusty, or dirty air
- Stress
- Vitamin deficiencies
- Simply not drinking enough water
- Radiation and chemotherapy
- Arthritis
- Diabetes
- Menopause
- Sjogren's Syndrome
- Lupus
- Parkinson's disease

What drugs and medications can cause dry mouth?:

- High blood pressure medicines
- Antidepressants
- Tranquilizers
- Antihistamines
- Anti-Parkinson agents
- Antipsychotics
- Decongestants
- Narcotic pain relievers
- Chemotherapy
- Antidiarrheals
- Bronchodilators

What problems might develop because of dry mouth?:

- Rapid development of tooth decay
- Sore tissues
- Worsening periodontal disease
- Sore spots and ulcers under dentures
- Difficulty wearing dentures
- Mouth sores in non-denture wearers
- Breath doesn't feel as fresh
- Difficulty chewing and swallowing normal foods
- Difficulty tasting normal foods
- Difficulty speaking
- Burning sensation in the mouth
- Dry or painful tongue



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How can I avoid destruction from rapid tooth decay?:

- Avoid hidden sugars, such as cough drops, lemon drops, hard candy, breath mints, chewing gum, soda pop, etc. People with dry mouths can get literally dozens of cavities in a matter of a few months.
- Use a prescription fluoride preparation. These get more fluoride to the teeth than regular fluoride toothpaste. They are available as a mouth rinse, brush-on gel, or a gel applied in a custom-made mouth tray. Ask your dentist for prescriptions, or construction of a custom fluoride tray. Prevident and Gel-Kam are examples.
- Maintain superior oral hygiene habits: brush at least twice a day for two minutes per brushing, floss every day, and have your teeth cleaned/checked twice a year.

What will help relieve my dry mouth?:

- Increase water intake throughout the day, and take frequent small sips
- Add moisture to the air with a humidifier.
- Protect lips with a balm.
- In cold weather keep mouth and nose covered with a scarf when outdoors.
- Don't use tobacco or alcohol.
- Avoid strong toothpastes.
- Avoid mouthwashes containing alcohol.
- Use only toothpastes and mouthwashes that don't contain sodium laurel sulfate.
- Avoid spicy and salty foods, and products containing cinnamon, peppermint, or wintergreen.
- Take a daily multi-vitamin.
- Use oral products that contains Xylitol.
- Be sure your doctors and pharmacist are aware of all the medications you are taking.
- Ask your doctor if your medications can be adjusted or changed.
- Use a saliva substitute or mouth moisturizers.
- Use sugarless hard candies to stimulate saliva flow.



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What products are available?

- Mouthwashes
 - Oasis
 - BetaCell Oral Rinse
 - Biotene Mouthwash
 - TheraBrite Oral Rinse
 - Tom's of Maine Natural Mouthwash, Oral Moistening
- Sprays
 - Moi-Stir Mouth Moistener spray (carboxymethylcellulose)
 - Mouth Kote mouth spray
 - Salivart Oral Moisturizer spray (carboxymethylcellulose)
 - Stoppers 4 Dry Mouth Spray (glycerin)
 - Thayers Dry Mouth Spray (glycerin)
- Toothpastes
 - Biotene Dry Mouth Toothpaste
 - Rembrandt Toothpaste for Canker Sore Sufferers
 - TheraBreath Oxygenating Toothpaste
 - Tom's of Maine Natural Anticavity & Dry Mouth Toothpaste
- Gums, Mints
 - Biotene Dry Mouth Gum
 - XyliChew mints
- Gels
 - Orajel Dry Mouth Moisturizing Gel
 - Oral Balance Mouth Moisturizing Gel, by Biotene
 - Saliva Substitute, by Roxane
 - Spry Dry Mouth Tooth Gel
- Other
 - Biotene Dry Mouth Denture Grip
 - Moi-Stir Oral Swabsticks (carboxymethylcellulose)
 - Salagen Tablets, 5mg (pilocarpine HCl); by prescription only

Where can I find these products?

- Stores carry a variety of products, but there is no one store that has them all. Keep trying different stores.
- The pharmacist can help you locate some of these products.
- On the internet, www.drugstore.com has a good selection of these products.