

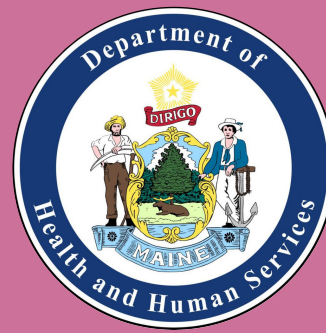
Dry mouth is when you don't have a normal amount of saliva in your mouth for a long time. Do you know how much is normal for you? Dry mouth can make you feel very uncomfortable.

Dry mouth is not a disease, but it can be a symptom of certain diseases. Some medicines and medical treatments can cause it. Radiation treatment, especially to the head and neck, can also cause dry mouth.



Remember...

- Dry mouth is uncomfortable, but there are alternatives you can use to feel better.
- Drink lots of fluids, especially water.
- Try using sugar-free candy or gum to help your mouth make more saliva.
- Avoid foods that can irritate a dry mouth.
- Don't smoke or use other tobacco products.
- Pay extra attention to taking care of your teeth and mouth.



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# DO YOU HAVE DRY MOUTH?

*There are things you can do  
to feel better.*





## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU HAVE DRY MOUTH?

It can be hard to eat, swallow or speak. Hot and cold foods and drinks, or even the air, may make your teeth hurt. You might be more likely to have tooth decay and tooth loss.

If you wear dentures, you might have to clean them more often; they may not fit as well. This is because you don't have enough saliva in your mouth.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT A DRY MOUTH?

You can do many things to relieve a dry mouth that will help you to take care of your mouth at the same time.



- Drink a lot, especially water. Avoid alcohol, caffeine and soda. These can make your mouth feel worse.
- Use sugar-free candy and gum they can help your mouth make more saliva.
- Use Vaseline or Chapstick on your lips, this will help alleviate dry and chapped lips.
- Avoid foods that can cause a dry mouth. Examples are dry breads, crackers, very spicy foods, or foods that are high in acid, such as grapefruit.
- Don't smoke or use other tobacco products. Tobacco is very irritating, especially to a dry mouth.
- Ask the pharmacists about artificial saliva. You do not need a prescription.

## PAY MORE ATTENTION TO TAKING CARE OF YOUR TEETH AND MOUTH

### USE A SOFT TOOTHBRUSH AND FLUROIDE TOOTHPASTE

Gently clean your teeth, gums or dentures at least twice a day, especially after meals. If you have your own teeth, use dental floss every day.

### MAKE SURE YOU GET FLUORIDE TO PROTECT YOUR TEETH.

Ask your dentist about using a fluoride mouth rinse, or gel, as this can also help if your teeth are too sensitive to hot or cold food or beverages.

### SEE YOUR DENTIST FOR A CHECKUP

Tell the dentist if you have dry mouth. Talk with him/her about your medicines and health problems. The dentist may suggest that you let your doctor know about your dry mouth. If medicine is causing dry mouth, the doctor may be able to prescribe something else.

