



Strategies for Managing Dry Mouth (Xerostomia)

Treatment for head and neck cancer, particularly radiation treatment, can damage the glands in your mouth that produce saliva, resulting in dry mouth (xerostomia).

BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER TREATMENT



REDUCE/PREVENT DRY MOUTH

Ask your doctor about medications that can:

- Protect your salivary glands during treatment
- Help maintain/stimulate saliva production



Apply wax- or lanolin-based lip balms with sunscreen.



Sleep with a humidifier in your room to alleviate nighttime discomfort.

ORAL HYGIENE

Maintain good daily oral hygiene using:

- High strength fluoride
- Remineralizing products
- Antibacterial products



Mouth Rinses May Help



- Alcohol-free mouthwash for dry mouth (Biotene or Oasis)
- Saliva substitutes

Appointment Reminder

We look forward to seeing you

every 3-4 months

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

See your dentist regularly (every 3 to 4 months).

DO'S AND DON'TS WITH FOOD

STAY HYDRATED



- Carry a water bottle whenever possible
- Drink at least 64 oz of fluids every day



Moisten food with sauces, gravies, or dressings.

Avoid alcohol, and limit caffeine.



Suck on sugar-free hard candy, especially tart flavors, or chew sugar-free gum.



Limit foods that are dry or hard to swallow, such as peanut butter, tough meats, and breads.

Look for products containing xylitol.

