

# XEROSTOMIA (Dry Mouth)

## Patient Information Handout



Definition:

Xerostomia (pronounced “zero-sto’me-ah”) is the medical word for dry mouth due to decreased or absent saliva. This problem is quite common and is caused by a variety of medication conditions and medications.

**\*People with dry mouth are at a greatly increased risk of developing dental cavities\***

Helpful Hints:

- Stay hydrated – sip cool water or let ice chips melt in your mouth (don’t chew ice!)
- Restrict caffeine – caffeine is a MAJOR cause of dry mouth. Use caffeine-free tea and coffee.
- Use a humidifier in the bedroom at night
- Use SUGAR FREE candy, gum and beverages to help moisturize the mouth. Look for products with Xylitol (a sweetener that does not cause cavities). Overuse of acidic candies and foods can cause a sore mouth and cavities.
- See your dentist frequently as people with dry mouth are more prone to dental cavities and oral yeast infections. Report any unusual oral soreness or burning sensations.
- Excellent oral hygiene is imperative to prevent cavities and gum disease.