

## Dry Mouth

Dry mouth is common among pre/post menopausal women and older adults. It is caused by certain medical disorders and is often a side effect of medications such as antihistamines, decongestants, pain killers and diuretics.

**Common problems associated with dry mouth:** Constant sore throat, a burning sensation, problems speaking, difficulty swallowing, hoarseness or dry nasal passages. Left untreated, dry mouth can severely damage your mouth. Without adequate saliva to lubricate your mouth, wash away food, and neutralize the acids produced by plaque, extensive decay and gum disease can occur.

### **To Do:**

- \*Drink plenty of water, rinse after eating if you can't brush.
- \*Floss daily to avoid plaque buildup.
- \*Use an electronic (pulsating) brush to break up the plaque.
- \*Chewing sugar-free gum and candy can increase the saliva for a short period of time.
- \*Your dentist can prescribe a saliva substitute or fluoride rinse to reduce painful symptoms and decay.
- \*Talk to your physician to see if a substitution for your medications might be available.

Information supplied by the ADA

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