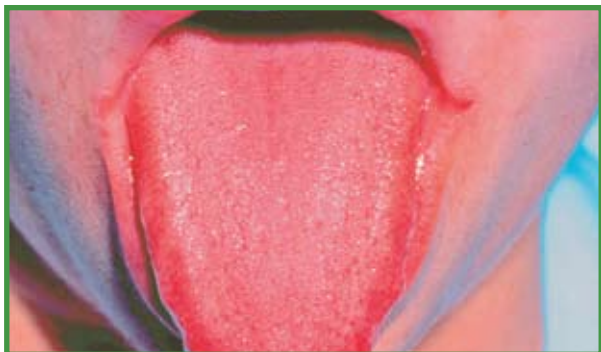


Dental and Oral Health Concerns

Dry Mouth (Xerostomia)



Dry mouth occurs when the salivary glands do not produce enough saliva (spit) to keep the mouth wet. This can make tasting, chewing, swallowing and speaking difficult. Dry mouth can also increase the chance of dental decay and infections in the mouth.

Causes:

- Some medications
- Radiation therapy
- Chemotherapy
- Certain diseases such as Sjogren's Syndrome

Daily Dental Care Tips

For Natural Teeth:

- Brush teeth twice a day.
- Floss teeth once a day.
- If flossing is difficult, a rubber tipped stimulator, special toothpicks, or a small pointed toothbrush can replace flossing.
- Clean cheeks, tongue and roof of the mouth with a soft toothbrush at least once a day.
- Use non-alcohol oral care products and a mild toothpaste as they are less irritating to mouth tissues.
- Use moisturizing products available at a pharmacy to ease the dryness.
- Chew sugar free gum or suck sugar free candies to ease the dryness.
- Drink plenty of water.

Dental and Oral Health Concerns

Dry Mouth (Xerostomia)

Professional Dental Visits:

- Dental professionals can discuss and prepare a daily oral care plan and recommend products that will relieve dry mouth symptoms.
- More frequent professional dental visits may be required.

Daily Denture Care:

- Dentures should be removed at night or for a rest period during the day, scrubbed, and then placed in a cup with warm water.
- Commercial dry mouth gel products available in the pharmacy can be placed under the denture to ease soreness and pain.
- Clean cheeks, tongue and roof of the mouth with a soft toothbrush at least once a day.
- Regularly monitor the dentures for fit, since a dry mouth can sometimes make dentures fit poorly.
- Full or partial dentures that are loose can prevent proper chewing and could be accidentally swallowed.
- Dentures should be labelled with the owner's name. A dentist or denturist can provide this service.

Did you know?

Oral cancer is found in 2-3% of the Canadian population. A dentist or physician should check the mouth annually for cancer.

For more information about dental health, please call

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