



PATIENT EDUCATION SHEET

The Foundation thanks Frederick Vivino, MD, FACR, University of Pennsylvania, Penn Rheumatology Associates & Sjögren's Syndrome Center, Philadelphia, for authoring "Simple Solutions for Treating Dry Mouth."

Simple Solutions for Treating Dry Mouth

- Ask your family doctor to discontinue or provide substitutes for all medications that cause dry mouth.
- Eat smaller, more frequent meals to stimulate saliva flow.
- Increase your intake of liquids (e.g. water) during the day. Small sips work best.
- Minimize time in air-conditioned environments such as offices, supermarkets, airplanes, etc.
- Use a humidifier at bedtime (target humidity 40-50%) during the fall and winter months when the air is dry to increase nighttime moisture and decrease discomfort.
- Stop cigarette, cigar and pipe smoking to lessen dryness and your risk for other health problems.
- Chew sugar-free gum or suck on hard diabetic or sugar-free candies, fruit pits or lemon rinds, if you are able to tolerate citrus, to activate reflexes that will increase saliva.
- Look for products containing xylitol, a sweetener that may help prevent dental decay.
- Try artificial saliva. Use 2-3 squirts in the mouth every hour while awake and at nighttime as needed. Do not spit out any preparation that is safe to swallow to help it last longer.
- When choosing mouthwashes or fluoride rinses avoid products containing alcohol or witch hazel which can aggravate oral dryness or burning.
- Apply vitamin E oil (use liquid or punch a hole in capsules) or moisturizing gels to dry or sore parts of the mouth or tongue. Use 2-3x/day after meals, at bedtime, when talking for long periods, exercising, or any other time your mouth needs long-lasting relief.
- Members can log in to the Sjögren's Foundation website to view its online Product Directory. If you are not a member, contact the Foundation to sign up.

Clinicians: Please make multiple copies of this Patient Education Sheet and distribute to your patients.