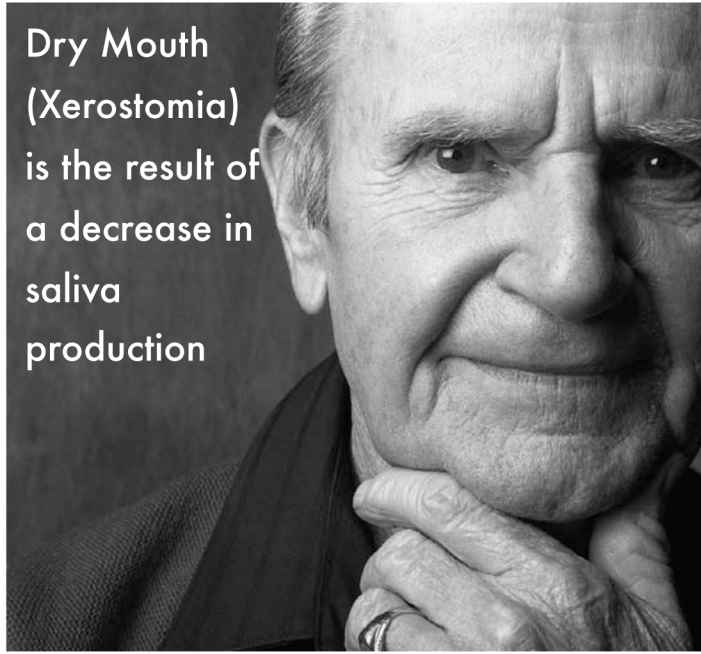


# DRY MOUTH

Dry Mouth  
(Xerostomia)  
is the result of  
a decrease in  
saliva  
production



**Xerostomia  
affects up to  
60% of older  
adults**



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## CAUSES OF DRY MOUTH

**Medications** (over 400 medications cause dry mouth)

**Radiation** to the head & neck

**Cancer treatments**

**Smoking**

**Immune deficiency**

**Systemic diseases** (Diabetes, Parkinson's, Sjogren syndrome)

**Salivary gland aplasia**

## SIGNS:

- \* **Red**, cracked, or **swollen** gum tissues
- \* Dry, cracked tongue
- \* Changes in taste
- \* Cracked corners of the mouth
- \* Lips that stick to the teeth
- \* Gums that bleed easily
- \* **Bad breath**
- \* Problems wearing dentures
- \* Frequent & abundant cavities
- \* Difficulty eating, swallowing or talking

## MANAGEMENT

- 1) Careful daily mouth care with fluoridated toothpaste
- 2) Clean between teeth with floss or alternative
- 3) Sip water or suck on ice cubes
- 4) Use water based lip lubricant
- 5) Chew sugar free gum or suck sugar free candy
- 6) Use saliva substitutes
- 7) Use a mist humidifier at night
- 8) Reduce or change medication (if possible) in consultation with physician
- 9) Regular check-ups with a dental professional

## If mouth is dry, avoid the following...

- ➔ Alcohol or alcohol products (such as mouth rinses with alcohol),
- ➔ Glycerin or lemon toothette swabs,
- ➔ Food and drinks that promote dry mouth (caffeine, sweet sticky foods, spicy, acidic or dry foods),
- ➔ Lemon or cinnamon flavored candy or gum

**Saliva lubricates the mouth and prevents decay by protecting tooth enamel and fungal/bacterial infections**



brushingup.ca

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