



DRY MOUTH PRODUCTS

I N F O R M A T I O N

Xerostomia (or dry mouth) is a condition that causes a lack of saliva in the mouth resulting in dry mouth. This can cause oral disease and discomfort.

DRY MOUTH:

Saliva is necessary to maintain the health of the teeth and gums. It protects, lubricates and cleanses the mouth and aids in disease resistance. Decreased saliva flow can be caused by medications, illness, chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypothyroidism, or from cancer therapy. Residents with a dry mouth may find that their tongue sticks to their palate and they may have trouble speaking, chewing food or swallowing. They may be thirsty and will probably lick their lips frequently. They may complain of a burning or sore mouth. Some residents will complain that their dentures hurt or do not fit properly.



POINTS TO CONSIDER:

Having a dry mouth can cause plaque and tartar to accumulate in the mouth increasing the risk of dental decay, particularly along the gum line.

Placing a humidifier in a resident's room may help alleviate some of the discomfort associated with dry mouth

Mouth rinses with alcohol, glycerin or lemon toothette swabs, and certain foods and candies can promote dry mouth.

Residents with dry mouth may stop eating because of discomfort when chewing and trying to swallow food. They may need large amounts of water to help moisten the food and to assist with swallowing.



DID YOU KNOW?



Dry mouth affects up to 60% of older adults

DRY MOUTH PRODUCTS

PRODUCTS TO TREAT DRY MOUTH



There are many ways to help residents with dry mouth such as placing a humidifier in their room, using toothpaste and rinses designed to treat dry mouth, and using saliva substitutes and lip lubricants. Some examples of commercial products are Oral balance, BioXtra, Xerostom, Moi-Stir, Mouth Kote, Optimoist, Xero-Lube & Biotene.

SALIVA SUBSTITUTES

Saliva substitutes are products that contain physical and chemical properties similar to natural saliva. Saliva substitutes can be applied throughout the entire mouth as often as needed for comfort. They provide lubrication that soothes and helps relieve dry mouth.



LIP LUBRICANTS

Dry, cracked lips are also common in residents who are dehydrated, are on many medications, or have nutritional deficiencies. Dry lips can be painful and embarrassing. It is important to keep the lips moist to allow comfort when eating and communicating. Lip lubricants contain lipid hydrophobic bases that help prevent moisture loss and softens the skin. Apply lip lubricants generally as often as needed to the lip area.



Saliva substitutes can help reduce burning and minor irritations and help with swallowing. Most saliva substitutes are naturally sweetened with xylitol.

