

Dry Mouth (Xerostomia)

Many patients find themselves facing an aggravating condition called “Dry Mouth” or Xerostomia. This condition presents as a lack of or decrease in saliva production. Patients can experience difficulty in swallowing, burning or irritated gum tissues and an increase in new areas of decay.

Saliva plays a critical role in keeping the proper chemical balance in the mouth. When the saliva is decreased, the pH of the mouth becomes more acidic and this can lead to a rapid increase in decay. Saliva also acts as a lubricant during chewing and swallowing food.

Dry Mouth is commonly associated with taking medications such as synthroid. Synthroid is used to treat thyroid deficiencies. There are many medications which can contribute to Dry Mouth.

Other causes of Dry Mouth can be Sjogren’s Disease, radiation to the head and neck, and smoking.

Recommendations for Dry Mouth

For our patients who experience Dry Mouth, we recommend the following to minimize their symptoms:

1. An alcohol free mouthwash such as Biotene
2. Biotene toothpaste, or Clinpro 5000 toothpaste
3. Maintaining a frequent recall cleaning schedule
4. Discontinue smoking

Please discuss this issue with your dentist to best treat your specific condition.