

Dry Mouth

Chemotherapy and radiation therapy in the head or neck area can reduce the flow of saliva and cause dry mouth. When this happens, foods are harder to chew and swallow. Dry mouth also can change the way foods taste. Some of the ideas for sore mouth and throat may help. The suggestions below also may help you deal with dry mouth.



- Have a sip of water every few minutes to help you swallow and talk more easily. Consider carrying a water bottle with you so you always have some handy.
- Try very sweet or tart foods and beverages, such as lemonade; these foods may help your mouth make more saliva. (Do not try this if you also have a tender mouth or sore throat and the sweet or tart foods make it worse.)
- Suck on hard candy or popsicles or chew gum. These can help make more saliva.
- Eat soft and pureed foods, which may be easier to swallow.
- Keep your lips moist with lip salves.
- Moisten food with sauces, gravies, and salad dressings to make it easier to swallow.
- If your dry mouth problem is severe, ask your doctor or dentist about products that coat, protect, and moisten your mouth and throat. These are sometimes called "artificial saliva."