

# Dry Mouth with Cancer Treatment

Cancer treatments, especially to the head or neck, can reduce saliva. A dry mouth may make food hard to chew and swallow. It may also change the taste of food. Eat healthy meals and drink liquids to help you feel better during treatment.

Try these tips to help a dry mouth:

- Carry a bottle of water with you. Have a sip of water every few minutes.
- Suck on hard candy, popsicles and ice chips.
- Chew gum.
- Keep your lips moist with lip balm.
- Ask your doctor about products to moisten your mouth.
- Eat soft foods and moisten foods with sauces, gravies or salad dressings.
- Do not drink beer, wine, or any type of alcohol. Alcohol can make your mouth even drier.
- Rinse your mouth every 1 to 2 hours with mouthwash made with 2 pinches ( $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon) baking soda, one pinch ( $\frac{1}{8}$  teaspoon) salt, and 1 cup warm water. You can also use a mouthwash that does not contain alcohol. Rinse and spit. Do not swallow. Rinse your mouth with plain water after you are done.

**Talk to your doctor, nurse or dietitian about dealing with any eating problems you may have.**