



## **PATIENT EDUCATION SHEET**

*The SSF thanks **Frederick Vivino, MD, FACR**, University of Pennsylvania, Penn Rheumatology Associates & Sjögren's Syndrome Center, Philadelphia, for authoring "Simple Solutions for Treating Dry Mouth."*

### **Simple Solutions for Treating Dry Mouth**

- ❖ Ask your family doctor to discontinue or provide substitutes for all medications that cause dry mouth.
- ❖ Eat smaller, more frequent meals to stimulate saliva flow.
- ❖ Increase your intake of liquids (e.g. water) during the day. Small sips work best.
- ❖ Minimize time in air-conditioned environments such as offices, supermarkets, airplanes, etc.
- ❖ Use a humidifier at bedtime (target humidity 40-50%) during the fall and winter months when the air is dry to increase nighttime moisture and decrease discomfort.
- ❖ Stop cigarette, cigar and pipe smoking to lessen dryness and your risk for other health problems.
- ❖ Chew sugar-free gum or suck on hard diabetic or sugar-free candies, fruit pits or lemon rinds, if you are able to tolerate citrus, to activate reflexes that will increase saliva. Look for products containing xylitol, a sweetener that may help prevent dental decay.
- ❖ Try artificial saliva. Use 2-3 squirts in the mouth every hour while awake and at nighttime as needed. Do not spit out any preparation that is safe to swallow to help it last longer.
- ❖ When choosing mouthwashes or fluoride rinses avoid products containing alcohol or witch hazel which can aggravate oral dryness or burning.
- ❖ Apply vitamin E oil (use liquid or punch a hole in capsules) or moisturizing gels to dry or sore parts of the mouth or tongue. Use 2-3x/day after meals, at bedtime, when talking for long periods, exercising, or any other time your mouth needs long-lasting relief.
- ❖ Contact the Sjögren's Syndrome Foundation to obtain a copy of its Product Directory, available free of charge to all members.

**For more information on Sjögren's contact the Sjögren's Syndrome Foundation at: 6707 Democracy Blvd, Suite 325, Bethesda, MD 20817 • [www.sjogrens.org](http://www.sjogrens.org) • Call 301-530-4420 • E-mail [ssf@sjogrens.org](mailto:ssf@sjogrens.org)**

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