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Treatment For Dry Mouth (Xerostomia) and Aggressive Cavities (Decay)

- Note: 1. Saliva washes acid from plaque/bacteria off the teeth. Saliva also buffers (neutralizes) these acids.
2. Calcium and phosphate salts in saliva remineralize (rebuild) the tooth enamel.
3. Too little saliva results in extreme decay (cavities) and severe periodontal (gum) disease.
4. Fluoride helps saliva protect enamel; it builds stronger (more acid-resistant) enamel and inhibits bacteria.
5. Age, medications, and conditions like diabetes may cause decreased salivation and dry mouth (xerostomia).
6. Age, dry mouth, and acidic drinks (eg. sodas) can initiate root decay and tooth loss.
1. Practice meticulous homecare – Brush, Floss, Fluoride + Tongue scraper!! Floss, then brush (not too forcefully). Thoroughly clean/scrape the tongue as far back as possible. Have 3-month cleanings; ideally Peridex (chlorhexidine) rinse for 30 seconds twice daily for two weeks prior to each 3-month cleaning.
 2. Use high-level fluoride toothpaste + fluoride rinse. Spit out; do not rinse. Most effective: Mouth trays with fluoride gel – 5 minutes per day. (Use while showering, dressing or some other regular daily activity) – spit out; do not rinse. 3-month fluoride varnish treatments are beneficial.
 3. Use MI paste or ClinPro 5000 to remineralize the teeth: Brush the teeth with MI paste; do not rinse or spit. Place trays on teeth for five minutes: Remove trays and spit: Do not rinse. Alternate high-level fluoride therapy for 1 month, then MI paste for 1 month. Spit out; do not rinse.
Do not use MI paste if dairy-allergic.
 4. Drink plenty of water (large container sipped throughout the day) and/or suck on ice chips.
Salivary substitutes – Rinse/swish frequently: (Salivart, Xerolube, Biotene, Oasis, etc.)
Salivary substitutes – small spray bottle: Spray frequently daily.
Biotene and Oasis have good lines of rinse, oral gel, and xylitol-based gum.
Rinse: Glass of warm water w. rounded teasp. of baking soda. Pinch salt to taste. Rinse frequently.
 5. Use sugarless gum, candies, snacks with Xylitol (no citric acid) to stimulate saliva and inhibit oral bacteria. Chew Xylitol-based gum (eg. Biotene) 5 times daily.
 6. Use a powered toothbrush to keep mouth cleaner; eg. Sonicare or Oral B.
 7. Use of Salistat tablets or other xylitol-based tablets – as needed, to stimulate salivary flow.
 8. Avoid carbonated drinks (sodas), sports/energy drinks and coffee. All such drinks are extremely acidic and damaging. (Acidity is measured by pH: lower is more acidic: a pH of 6.5 dissolves dentin (root); a pH 5.5 dissolves enamel. Carbonated drinks (sodas), Gatorade, and Red Bull have a pH of 3±: very damaging!)
Drink sodas quickly: never sip slowly. Fruit juices must be calcium-fortified to minimize tooth damage.
 9. Limit snacks (especially carbs and sugars) to 3 times daily and avoid these (#8) drinks. After snacks and drinks, rinse with water. If the drinks/snacks are acidic, rinse with an antacid liquid, do not brush the now-weakened enamel. Wait 1 hour to brush, gently, always beginning the tooth brushing in a different location.
 10. Use an anti-microbial (germ-killing) rinse (Peridex-type vs. Crest Pro-Health Rinse) 2-3 X daily.
 11. Be aware of your medications causing dry mouth. Ask your doctor about changing to a similar medication with fewer dry-mouth effects; and Pilocarpine or a similar medication to stimulate saliva production.
 12. Know that this may be a long-term problem, requiring a long-term commitment on your part.