What is Dry Mouth?

- Dry mouth is also known as xerostomia
- It is a reduction in salivary flow typically caused by certain systemic oral medications, radiation therapy, or systemic diseases such as Sjogren’s Syndrome.
- Elderly patients are more at risk since they are on more medications than other parts of the population.
- Saliva plays an important role in oral health as it helps maintain a healthy pH in the mouth by neutralizing acids, lubricating oral tissues, and remineralizing enamel.

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How Medications Affect the Mouth

References:

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**Effects on the Mouth:**
- A sticky, dry, or burning feeling in the mouth
- Trouble chewing, swallowing, tasting, or speaking
- Increased risk for cavities
- Cracked or peeling lips
- A dry, rough tongue
- Mouth sores
- Difficulty retaining dentures
- Halitosis (Bad breath)

**Common Medications Causing Dry Mouth:**
- Tolterodine
- Duloxetine
- Oxybutynin
- Famotidine
- Furosemide

**Common Medical Conditions that Cause Dry Mouth:**
- Diabetes
- Stroke
- HIV/AIDS
- Alzheimer's Disease
- Sjogren's Syndrome
- Mouth Thrush

**Treatment Options:**
(How to treat dry mouth)
- Adjusting or changing your medications (under the supervision of a physician)
- Over-the-counter mouth rinses such as Biotene Dry Mouth Oral Rinse™ or Act Dry Mouth Mouthwash™
- Have saliva-stimulating medications prescribed by your dentist or doctor
- To prevent potential cavities, dentists may fit the patient for a fluoride tray to wear overnight and recommend medicated mouth rinse
- Frequent sips of water; increase in humidity at night-time; avoidance of irritating toothpastes, and use of sugar-free chewing gums/candy.