

Information Sheet

Mouth Self Care

It is very common for hospice patients to experience problems with oral health. This information sheet is aimed to help prevent and ease symptoms.

If you would like further information, please feel free to discuss this with your Care Coordinator.

To prevent problems occurring the following guidelines are recommended:

- Clean teeth after meals and before bedtime every day.
- Use a soft toothbrush e.g. baby toothbrush.
- Use fluoride toothpaste.
- Rinse the mouth with water.
- If your tongue is coated we recommend a mouth wash with ½ tsp salt and ½ tsp baking soda in one glass of warm water.



Using a soft toothbrush is recommended.

Report to a hospice nurse or doctor any of the following:

- A coating on your tongue
- Pain
- Ulcers or swelling
- Dry mouth
- Difficulty swallowing

- A bad taste or breath
- Any unusual bleeding
- Cracked, dry lips

How to use Mycostatin/Nilstat:

You may have been prescribed an anti fungal treatment for oral thrush:

- Use **after** each main meal and before going to bed.
- Clean teeth as recommended.
- Rinse with ½ tsp salt and ½ tsp baking soda dissolved in a glass of warm water.
- Rinse your mouth with one dropper of Mycostatin/Nilstat and swallow.
- **If you have dentures:** after cleaning, pour a little Mycostatin/Nilstat on the top and bottom plate surface which comes into contact with the mouth, then replace in your mouth.
- **Do not eat or drink anything for ½ an hour.**

Managing a sore mouth

If your mouth is sore, choosing foods carefully can help:

- Have nourishing milky drinks rather than fruit juices.
- Cold foods and fluids like milkshakes, custard, chilled soups, yoghurt, ice cream, jelly and mousse can be soothing.
- Let hot foods cool down slightly.
- Try softer foods such as porridge, soup, egg dishes, pasta with sauce, fish in sauce and milky puddings.

- Avoid highly spiced foods such as curries and pickles, acidic foods such as citrus fruits and tomatoes and dry foods like biscuits, toast and crisps.
- Avoid neat alcohol or fortified wines.
- Minimise or avoid smoking or chewing tobacco.
- Use a teaspoon or straw to avoid food coming in contact with the sorest part of your mouth.
- Your doctor or nurse may tell you to try an anaesthetic mouthwash or give you painkillers to use.



Cold drinks may help ease a dry, sore mouth.

Managing a dry mouth

If you have a dry mouth:

- Your doctor may need to change your medicines.
- Remember to brush your teeth regularly with fluoride toothpaste.
- Try boiled sweets and sugar-free gum.
- Cold drinks, sips of water, ice cubes may help.
- Try moist food with plenty of gravy or sauces and melt butter over vegetables.
- Cut food into small pieces so less chewing is needed.
- Take sips of water in between bites of food.
- Avoid alcohol, very hot drinks and mouthwashes containing alcohol or glycerine.
- Unsweetened pineapple juice or iceblocks may help.
- Oral gel lubricants are available over the counter from pharmacies.