

Is there anything else which well help?

- Good head posture is important to minimise drooling
- A collar to prevent the head from falling forwards may be helpful
- If you can feel the saliva building up in your mouth, try to suck in, close your lips and swallow back
- Family members may be able to remind you to swallow regularly
- Sucking on a hard sweet or chewing gum may help you to swallow back more often
- It is important to keep your chin and lips dry regularly dabbing with a tissue. This will prevent them from becoming chapped and sore
- Scarves of absorbent material may be worn around the neck

Notes:

What if my saliva is very thick?

If your saliva is very thick you may need to increase your fluids intake by drinking more.

Reducing your intake of caffeine and alcohol may help.

Sucking sugar free citrus lozenges or sipping fruit juices may also help.

Your doctor may be able to prescribe medication which will improve the consistency of your saliva.

It is important to pay careful attention to brushing your teeth twice a day. This will help prevent your saliva from becoming infected with bacteria.

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PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Drooling



What is saliva?

Saliva is produced from six major salivary glands and hundreds of small glands found around the mucosa of the mouth. Its functions include:

- Lubrications and cleaning
- Taste
- Swallowing and digestion
- Water balance
- Maintain of correct pH in mouth
- Coagulation of blood

What normally happens to saliva?

Most people normally produce approximately one and a half litres of saliva
each day. This saliva is automatically swallowed throughout the day.

What causes drooling?

- Drooling occurs when a person has difficulty controlling their saliva so that it drips out of their mouth
- Drooling can be the result of hypersecretion (increased amounts of saliva) but more commonly occurs as a result of poor oral muscle control
- Drooling often occurs as a result of a decrease in the frequency of spontaneous swallowing and/or a reduction in the sensory awareness necessary for swallowing

What problems can arise from drooling?

For most people drooling is an embarrassing problem which they may find difficult to explain to people they do not know well.

Drooling may cause a rash or chapping around the mouth and chin from the irritation of the constant moisture

If saliva is not regularly cleared from the mouth through swallowing there is a risk that residual saliva will begin to harbour bacteria and may develop an unpleasant smell

Drooling may cause clothes and skin on the chest to be damp.



What can help treat drooling?

Medication
Your doctor may prescribe medications which will reduce the amount of saliva produced. There may be side effects from these medications which your doctor or pharmacist will talk to you about, and answer and questions you might have.

Speech and Language Therapy
Your Speech & Language Therapist may be able to improve the strength of the muscles used for speech and swallowing. This may improve your ability to control your saliva and reduce drooling.

Behavioural Therapy
Clients can be trained to associate behaviour with a cue, for example swallowing or wiping the face is associated with an electronic beep.

Surgery
If severe and persistent drooling is a problem for you, surgical procedure to reduce the amount of saliva produced in the salivary glands can be carried out.