



Integrative Therapies Program for
Children with Cancer
Herbert Irving Cancer Center, 7th Floor

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COPING WITH DRY MOUTH/ THICK SALIVA

General Guidelines that help:

- Serve foods that are moist and easy to swallow
- Drink plenty of liquids throughout the day
- Use lip salves, mouth moisturizers
- A room humidifier or humidified face mask may help
- Use a straw to drink liquids
- Avoid foods containing caffeine (sodas, black teas, coffees, foods high in chocolate)
- Use tasty oils to lubricate the mouth before meals (I.E.: Olive oil, Flaxseed oil, Sesame oil)
- Meat tenderizers can assist in dissolving thick saliva. Mix ½ tsp of unseasoned meat tenderizer in ½ cup of water and rinse mouth with the solution. Do not swallow.
- Saliva substitutes and oral moisturizers are available your drugstore.
- Avoid mouthwashes and acidic beverages

Foods that may help:

- Sweet and tart foods increase the flow of saliva and can help break up excess saliva. Lemons or lemon juice can be added or mixed with water or sodas.
- Hard candies (tart & citrus flavors), popsicles, flavored ice cubes
- Soft and pureed vegetables
- Soups, broths, and gravies can help moisten foods and keep mouth moist
- Warm lemonade
- Melon, pineapple, or papaya fruit (juice)
- Thin, hot cereal

Herbs/Complementary Therapies that may help:

**The use of herbs is not recommended. The information is provided because many have inquired about these particular agents. Although, the following herbs have not been found to be harmful in small studies, there is still limited information available about their use in children in conjunction with chemotherapy. It is imperative that the use of herbs be discussed with your child's physician before proceeding with any of these therapies.*

- Application of evening primrose oil inside mouth
- Slippery elm tea and/or chamomile tea with aloe vera juice added can be sipped throughout the day