

MARIJUANA AND ORAL HEALTH

One side effect of marijuana that medical users experience is a condition known as “xerostomia,” which is better known as dry mouth or "cotton mouth." While most patients think of dry mouth as a mild annoyance or inconvenience associated with their medical use of cannabis, frequent dry mouth may contribute to dental decay. Saliva not only helps us to chew and digest food, but prevents infection by controlling bacteria in the mouth and protecting teeth from decay. Here are a few tips for combating dry mouth and protecting your teeth:

- Always keep a bottle of water, and sip frequently
- Suck on crushed ice
- Avoid liquids containing caffeine or alcohol
- Use a humidifier at night time
- Use commercial artificial saliva, available over the counter as liquids, sprays or tablets

Depending on the severity of your dry mouth, you may consider contacting your doctor to discuss ways of addressing this condition.