



# Oral Health

## Difficulty Chewing or Swallowing

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Oral health is a large part of our overall health. What we eat, or our nutrition, can be greatly influenced by the state of our oral health. Difficulties chewing and swallowing can be caused by many things, including a dry mouth, mouth ulcers, pain, poorly fitting dentures, and cavities. In each of these situations nutrition can suffer, and may lead to weight loss, dehydration, or even choking. All are



serious consequences that affect overall quality of life. This newsletter focuses on nutrition and common oral health problems, it gives you ideas and tips on how to deal with some of these problems and still eat well. This newsletter is meant as a guide only, if you are having persistent mouth pain, or difficulty swallowing, consult your doctor or health professional as soon as possible. It could be a sign of something more serious.

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### Dry Mouth

A dry mouth is a common side effect of many medications and illnesses. It can affect all aspects of eating, including chewing, swallowing and taste. In order to make eating more comfortable, try the following tips.

- Moisten foods with gravies, sauces, or broths
- Drink plenty of fluids be-

fore, during, and after all meals and snacks

Avoiding the following foods may make it easier to eat:

- Sticky foods (peanut butter)
- Crumbly foods (crackers/cakes)
- Overly chewy foods (steak)
- Really spicy foods

### Remember:

- When you have a dry mouth and less saliva, you may get cavities more easily
- Its important to brush your teeth after each meal and snack

### Oral Health Wordsearch



A I T Y U W W P V S D Q N T I  
 S W A L L O W I N G E V D C O  
 C S J N U R E Q H Y N T A H H  
 I Y O C A V T T B J T V G C J  
 O R A L C A E H K R I P E F D  
 D S P X F E G X N T S Z O O F  
 A E L C T F R C Y Y T O A Z J  
 G N N F Y X M R V U M R V Z T  
 V A T T P A N K O U L C J Z F  
 C L K B U J H T U O M E N C U  
 Z J N U J R F E I I Y S N A N  
 U V Q G G U E B I E W N Q I E  
 B R U S H G R S Z G X I C Z V  
 V P U Q U V A I Y Z T R Y E M  
 F Y C A X I Y V P X F F A C U



Find the following Oral Health words in the above wordsearch.

- Mouth
- Cavity
- Floss
- Brush
- Teeth
- Swallowing
- Dentist
- Rinse
- Dentures

Answers to last month's crossword puzzle. **Across** 2. Cold 3. Throw 6. Supplements 7. Lily **Down** 1. Medications 4. Folate 5. Negative

### Bring a Friend to Lunch Coupon

Volunteers of America would like to invite you to bring a friend to lunch. Fill out this coupon and place it in the contribution box when you join us for lunch. *New guests will have some paperwork to fill out.* Call the VOA office at 303-297-0408 to find out the dining center nearest you.

\_\_\_\_\_ I brought a friend to lunch today. \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Friend)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ This is my first time joining you for lunch today.

Coupon valid 5/1/06 until 5/31/06

## Quick Fix Recipe of the Month

### Herb Tomato Slices

**Yield: 6 servings**  
**Serving Size: 4 slices**



**Ingredients:**

- 3 medium tomatoes
- 2/3 cup fresh bread crumbs
- 1 tablespoon fat-free margarine, melted
- 1/4 teaspoon dried basil

**Method:**

1. Slice tomatoes and place in shallow baking dish.
2. Mix bread crumbs, margarine and basil.
3. Sprinkle mixture over tomatoes and bake, uncovered, at 350 degrees for 5 to 6 minutes or until crumbs are brown.

*Recipe taken from the 'Low Fat & Light Four Ingredient Cookbook.'*

### Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 4 slices (89g)  
 Servings Per Container 6

Amount Per Serving

**Calories 70**      **Calories from Fat 10**

% Daily Value\*

**Total Fat 1g** **2%**

Saturated Fat 0g **0%**

**Cholesterol 0mg** **0%**

**Sodium 110mg** **5%**

**Total Carbohydrate 12g** **4%**

Dietary Fiber 1g **4%**

Sugars 2g

**Protein 2g**

Vitamin A 10%      •      Vitamin C 20%

Calcium 2%      •      Iron 4%

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

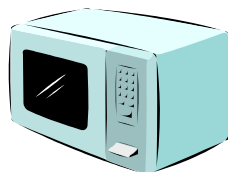
		Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less Than	65g	80g	
Saturated Fat	Less Than	20g	25g	
Cholesterol	Less Than	300mg	300 mg	
Sodium	Less Than	2,400mg	2,400mg	
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g	
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g	

Calories per gram:  
 Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Lou's

### Food Safety Tip of the Month: Clean Your Microwave

Often times this handy appliance is overlooked for regular cleaning and not thought of when you think about cross-contamination. But the microwave can harbor many harmful germs, when food spills inside or "explosions" are not cleaned up. Make the following tips into habits when re-heating, defrosting, or cooking anything in the microwave.



- Wipe up spills and "explosions" immediately
- Wipe out the microwave regularly
- Wash the turntable with hot, soapy water weekly
- Cover foods with saran wrap or a lid while re-heating or cooking them
- When defrosting raw meats, place them on a plate to catch juices



## Do All Foods Cause Cavities?

One of the main causes of dental caries, or cavities, is what you eat. Every food causes a reaction in the saliva of your mouth. Saliva either becomes acidic with a pH below 7.0, or alkaline with a pH above 7.0. You may be wondering what this has to do with cavities—well the pH of saliva can actually cause you to become more susceptible to cavities. Certain foods are actually known to cause the pH of saliva to drop below 5.5, which is what is needed to start the cavity ball rolling. The good news is that there are also foods that cause the pH of saliva to rise above 5.5, which prevents the start of cavities. Keep this in mind when choosing snacks in-between meals. If you choose the foods that cause the cavity ball to start rolling, brush your teeth im-

mediately after eating. If that's not an option, rinse your mouth out well and chew *sugar-free* gum containing xylitol.

**Foods that do not contribute to tooth decay:** Protein foods, Eggs, Meat, Fish, Poultry, Raw fruits and vegetables, Cheese, Peanuts, Sugarless gums

**Foods that contribute to tooth decay:** Dried fruits, Soft drinks, Fruit drinks, Lemonade, Snack crackers, Pretzels or chips, Muffins, Candy, Cookies, Pies, Cakes, Ice cream, Gelatin desserts

Because it is not realistic to stop eating the foods that contribute to decay, it is important to practice good oral hygiene. This includes regular visits to the dentist, even if you wear dentures, and brushing and flossing every day.