

## Mouth problems

Your mouth can become sore if you have dentures that don't fit properly, mouth ulcers, infection or a dry mouth as a side-effect of medication. Mouth problems can make eating and drinking unpleasant, but it is important that you continue to eat and drink as well as you can.

- **Choose soft foods** as these require less chewing (see the 'Fortified soft diet' resource for examples).
- **Serve meals with a sauce** such as gravy, cream or custard to keep food moist.
- **Try soaking dry foods** to make them easier to eat; for example cereal with warm milk, dipping bread into soup or dunking biscuits into your cup of tea.
- **Allow foods and drinks to cool down** and take small mouthfuls at a time.
- **Use a straw in your drinks** throughout the day.
- **Stimulate saliva flow** by sucking ice cubes, boiled sweets or chewing gum.
- **Choose cool, smooth foods to refresh and soothe your mouth** such as yoghurts, ice cream or mousses.
- **Avoid salty, spicy or sharp foods**, which may sting your mouth.
- **Refrain from drinking alcohol or smoking** as these irritate your mouth and throat.
- **Apply lip balm** to relieve chapped dry lips.

## Dental care

It is important to maintain your oral hygiene and visit your dentist regularly, as having a sore or dry mouth can make you more prone to tooth decay.

- **Leave dentures to soak in a denture-cleaning solution** overnight and brush to remove all debris.
- **Help prevent chafing** and remove your dentures when you can.
- **Your dentures may not fit properly** if you have lost weight. Visit your dentist to get them refitted.

**Tip: Speak with your dentist, GP or pharmacist for more specialised advice**

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about these information sheets, please contact the Lambeth and Southwark Action on Malnutrition Project on 020 30495422 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets)

### Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

**t:** 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

To make comments or raise concerns about the Trust's services, please contact PALS. Ask a member of staff to direct you to the PALS office or:

**t:** 020 7188 8801 at St Thomas'    **t:** 020 7188 8803 at Guy's    **e:** [pals@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@gstt.nhs.uk)

### Language Support Services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch using the following contact details.

**t:** 020 7188 8815    **fax:** 020 7188 5953

### NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

**t:** 111

### NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

**w:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### Become a member of your local hospitals, and help shape our future

Membership is free and it is completely up to you how much you get involved. To become a member of our Foundation Trust, you need to be 18 years of age or over, live in Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Wandsworth or Westminster or have been a patient at either hospital in the last five years. To join:

**t:** 0848 143 4017    **e:** [members@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:members@gstt.nhs.uk)    **w:** [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk)