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| **Name:** |
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| **Group:** |
| 7A-5 |
| **Basic Science Question:** |
| What is xerostomia? |
| **Report:** |
| Xerostomia refers to the condition of dry mouth. This feeling of dry mouth happens when the salivary glands are not producing enough saliva to keep the mouth sufficiently wet. Saliva plays an essential role in the clearing of bacteria in the mouth, so the oral ecosystem can be dramatically affected when there is not enough saliva. Because of this, xerostomia can increase a person’s risk of tooth decay and oral infections. Xerostomia is not an illness itself, but it can be a sign of other problems.  Many systemic and local factors can cause xerostomia in an individual. Some common causes of xerostomia are medications, systemic diseases, and radiation therapy. Someone can also have occasional xerostomia from the consumption of alcohol, caffeine, tobacco, and other behavioral factors.  Patients with xerostomia may have difficulty swallowing, chewing, and speaking. It can also lead to the patient experiencing an altered taste in their mouth and the overall feeling of dry mouth. Chewing sugar-free gum, drinking water, and oral rinses or sprays can help alleviate some of the symptoms of xerostomia. |
| **References:** |
| “Dry Mouth Causes, Symptoms, Diagnosis, Treatment.” *National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, July 2018, www.nidcr.nih.gov/health-info/dry-mouth/more-info?\_ga=2.10121975.353174889.1602029498-165048390.1476136437.  Millsop, Jillian W., et al. “Etiology, Evaluation, and Management of Xerostomia.” *Clinics in Dermatology*, vol. 35, no. 5, 2017, pp. 468–476., doi:10.1016/j.clindermatol.2017.06.010.  “Xerostomia (Patient Education - Disease and Procedure).” *Lexicomp for Dentistry*, 0-online.lexi.com.libus.csd.mu.edu/lco/action/doc/retrieve/docid/disandproc/3558370?cesid=30Ir4g9AwXD. |