



## ORAL HEALTH KANSAS

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# Tips and Tricks: Medications and Your Child's Oral Health



Some over the counter and prescription medications for children can put their oral health at risk. Understanding the possible effects and how to reduce the impact will help you keep your child's mouth and teeth healthy.

### **Sugar-added (Sugar-based) prescribed and over-the counter medications**

Many liquid medications contain sugar to make it taste better. This can increase the chances of tooth decay and accidental overuse by children

#### **Steps to Take**

- Read labels on over-the-counter products to determine if there is sugar.
- Request sugar-free prescriptions from the doctor.
- After using a sugar based medication, older children should swish with water. Wipe your younger child's mouth and teeth with a clean, wet washcloth.
- Store medications out of the reach of children.



### **Dry Mouth (xerostomia)**

More than 3000 medications have been shown to cause dry mouth. This is a concern because the saliva in the mouth helps to wash away food and neutralizes cavity-causing acids. In addition, people are more likely to sip on sugary liquids or suck on candy to sooth their dryness.

#### **Steps to Take**

- Give your child water to sip throughout the day.
- Offer sugar free popsicles as a treat.
- Ask your child's doctor or dentist about over-the-counter products for dry mouth that are safe for children.



### **Thrush**

Thrush is a type of fungal infection that can occur when children take certain medications. It looks like a thick white coating on the tongue or cheeks.

#### **Steps to Take**

- If you think your child has thrush, take them to their doctor.

