

Advice for helping with saliva control

Information for parents and carers

Some children can find it difficult to control their saliva. This is sometimes to be expected in young children. Some children who have issues with tonsils and adenoids and/or frequent colds and blocked noses may develop a pattern of breathing through their mouths resulting in having an open mouth much of the time. They can find it tricky to remember to close their lips and swallow.

Things to try:

- Help to make your child aware that their chin or clothes are wet. Encourage them to dab it dry rather than wipe to reduce more saliva being produced.
- Use a waterproof backed bib or bandana that you can change easily to keep their clothes dry.
- Help them to understand what 'swallow' means. You can use the word at mealtimes when they are eating or play a tea party game saying 'swallow' as you give them a teaspoon of water.
- Once they understand what 'swallow' means you can remind them regularly to close their mouth and swallow. Let them see you doing this too.
- When you are looking at books together try reminding them to close their mouth and swallow every couple of pages.
- Remember that using a dummy once your child is starting to talk, might result in them forming an open mouth posture that can make saliva control more difficult.
- Try to prevent your child putting fingers or objects in their mouths on a regular basis, to reduce the stimulation of saliva production.
- Avoid sweets and fizzy drinks where possible.

For more advice, you can visit our sites below:



www.lets-talk.scot.nhs.uk

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