

## WHEN CAN A SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPIST HELP?

If after four months you still have concerns, you should raise this with your Public Health Nurse, GP or Paediatrician. They may then send a request for assistance to Speech and Language Therapy.

# Saliva control and your child

Advice and information  
for parents

**NHS Lanarkshire** - for local services  
and the latest health news visit  
[www.nhslanarkshire.org.uk](http://www.nhslanarkshire.org.uk)  
NHS Lanarkshire General  
Enquiry Line: 08453 130 130

**NHS inform** - The national health  
information service for Scotland.  
[www.nhsinform.co.uk](http://www.nhsinform.co.uk)  
Tel No: 0800 22 44 88

If you need this information  
in another language or  
format, please contact the  
NHS Lanarkshire General Enquiry  
Line on 08453 130 130 or e-mail  
[info2@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:info2@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk)

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## GENERAL ADVICE ON SALIVA CONTROL

### DO ✓

- ❖ Try to keep your child's chin as dry as possible. They will then be more likely to notice if it becomes wet.
- ❖ Pat your child's mouth area lightly with a soft tissue or towelling wristband.
- ❖ On a daily basis, carry out a selection of the exercises and games suggested in the advice sheets, making these as much fun as possible.
- ❖ Play mirror games to encourage your child to close their lips. Puff out your cheeks together, or take turns to choose a 'sound effect' for the other person to do, For example 'rain' p, p, p/'wind' woo, woo, woo/'cow' moo, moo, moo/'drum' b, b, b,
- ❖ Try to use the word 'swallow' in relation to eating and drinking at mealtimes. This will help your child to understand the word and develop more awareness of what a swallow feels like. 'Oh, I'm going to *swallow* the last bit of potato on my plate!'

### DO ✓

- ❖ Remind your child to swallow regularly, perhaps using a little signal that your child understands while in company, such as touching your chin with your index finger.
- ❖ Talk frequently about 'wet' and 'dry' things like foods/environments/animal homes/weather.
- ❖ Give gentle reminders and lots of praise for any success.

### DON'T X

- ❖ Don't wipe or rub your child's mouth horizontally with a tissue. (**This encourages more saliva!**)
- ❖ Don't use bottles and dummies unless there is a medical reason for your child to use these beyond the age of three.
- ❖ Don't use a bib unless absolutely necessary. A bib may reduce your child's awareness of saliva loss.
- ❖ Try not to NAG (!)
- ❖ **Don't worry!**  
Remember, most children grow out of the problem.

## FACTORS AFFECTING YOUR CHILD'S SALIVA CONTROL

- ❖ General maturity/stage of development
- ❖ Attention control
- ❖ Teething/tooth decay
- ❖ Enlarged tonsils/adenoids
- ❖ Tiredness/feeling unwell
- ❖ Use of dummy/bottle
- ❖ Physical and other medical issues.

After you have raised your concerns with your Public Health Nurse, GP or Paediatrician, you will be given appropriate advice and helpful leaflets containing fun strategies, games and activities for you to try at home with your child. In order for these to work, they will need to be carried out on a daily basis over a period of at least four months. Choose activities that your child likes, varying them from time to time to keep your child interested.