



PSYCHIATRIC MEDICATIONS AND YOUR DENTAL HEALTH



Taking care of your mental health is just as important as caring for your body. Psychiatric medications can be life-changing for conditions like depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, ADHD, and schizophrenia. But did you know that these medicines can also affect your teeth and gums? The good news is there are simple steps you can take to keep your smile healthy.

How These Medications Help



Antidepressants (like fluoxetine, sertraline): Help ease depression and anxiety symptoms.



Antipsychotics (like risperidone, aripiprazole): Help reduce symptoms such as hallucinations, delusions, severe agitation, or mania-related symptoms.



Mood Stabilizers (like lithium, carbamazepine): Help reduce mood episode intensity and recurrence in bipolar disorder.



Stimulants (like Ritalin, Adderall): Help improve focus and attention in ADHD.



Anti-anxiety meds (like diazepam, buspirone): May help reduce anxiety, tension, or panic symptoms, depending on the medication.



Many psychiatric medications work by affecting brain chemicals called neurotransmitters, which help regulate mood, thoughts, attention, and energy.

Common Mouth and Dental Side Effects



Sometimes these medicines can change what's going on inside your mouth. Here's what to watch out for:

1

Dry Mouth: Not enough saliva makes it easier for cavities and gum disease to start.



2

Teeth Grinding or Jaw Clenching: Can cause jaw pain, cracked teeth, or worn enamel.



3

Gum Changes: Some medicines may make gums swell, overgrow, or bleed more easily.



4

Taste Changes: Foods may taste different, or your mouth might feel like it's burning.



5

Infections and Sores: Less saliva means higher risk of yeast infections (thrush) or mouth ulcers.








6

Cavities: A dry mouth combined with sugary snacks or drinks puts teeth at higher risk.



Quick Look: Medications and Mouth Effects



MEDICATION TYPE	EXAMPLES	POSSIBLE MOUTH EFFECTS
 SSRIs	Fluoxetine, sertraline	Dry mouth, teeth grinding, taste changes
 Antipsychotics	Haloperidol, aripiprazole	Dry mouth, movement-related jaw or tongue symptoms, drooling, or oral discomfort.
 Mood Stabilizers	Lithium, carbamazepine	Dry mouth, metallic taste, drooling, mouth ulcers, or gum irritation, depending on the medication.
 Stimulants	Ritalin, Adderall	Dry mouth, jaw clenching or teeth grinding, gum irritation, or higher cavity risk.
 Tricyclics	Amitriptyline	Dry mouth, oral infections (like thrush)



What You Can Do to Protect Your Smile



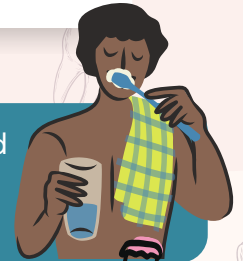
1

Sip water often to keep your mouth moist.



4

Brush twice a day and floss daily to fight plaque and decay.



2

Chew sugar-free xylitol gum or suck on sugar-free lozenges to boost saliva, if safe for your teeth and swallowing.



5

Cut back on sugary drinks and snacks, especially between meals.



3

See your dentist regularly and let them know what medications you take.



6

Speak up early if you notice mouth sores, burning, or jaw pain.



Real-Life Examples

- A child taking fluoxetine might say food tastes different, bland, or that their mouth feels uncomfortable.
- A teen on ADHD medication may have more cavity risk if dry mouth, frequent sweet drinks, or brushing struggles are part of the picture.

With good oral care and support from both dentists and doctors, these problems can be managed.



Helpful Resources



- National Center for Mental Health (NCMH): ncmh.gov.ph
- Philippine Psychiatric Association (PPA): philippinepsychiatricassociation.org
- Philippine Dental Association (PDA): pda.com.ph

Remember: Psychiatric medications support your mental health, and with a little extra care, you can protect your dental health too.

Healthy mind, healthy smile!

