



**Oral Health Awareness Week**  
**19-23<sup>rd</sup> September 2022, St Michael's**  
**House**



**Ross Tully, Pharmacist - Key Messages from his presentation 'Medications & How they can impact on oral health'**

1. The tablets and medicines you take can affect your mouth, gums, teeth, tongue and taste.
2. Looking after these areas is known as oral hygiene
3. It is important you make people aware if you have any problems with oral hygiene
4. Talk to your family, carers, doctors, chemist and dentist
5. Some problems that can happen because of tablets/medicines include;
  - a. Dry Mouth – you don't produce enough saliva (spit) you need saliva to keep your mouth healthy (some examples of tablets that cause dry mouth are tablets for allergies, for high blood pressure and inhalers)
  - b. Bleeding gums – if you are on tablets that thin your blood you might be more at risk of bleeding gums. Other tablets can also cause gums to be red and swollen. Always tell the dentist the tablets you are taking.
  - c. Black tongue, teeth and gums- the areas are not really black but are dark red due to bacteria in the mouth (which can cause bad breath) or staining from tablets. Sometimes a mouthwash such as corsodyl can cause staining so like your tablets/medications, the person who advised you to use them should review them to see if they are still needed
  - d. Taste –some tablets/medications can affect your taste, you might get a nasty taste like metal in your mouth. It is important to rinse your mouth with water regularly and take the tablets/medicines as the label says
  - e. Bone Loss- tablets used to help your bones can also cause problems for the bones in your mouth. If you are taking tablets/drinks for osteoporosis you should always tell your dentist as these medications can thin the bones of the mouth leading to a condition known as osteocronosis
  - f. Holes in your teeth- because some tablets/medicines may not taste nice sugar/sweeteners are added to them. If possible go for sugar free solutions or swallow quickly and don't allow the tablet to stay in your mouth
  - g. Mouth ulcers and sores- These can be a result of being unwell and then made worse by tablets to make you better. Always tell the chemist/doctor/nurse/dentist as it may be possible to change the tablets/medicines and/or suggest something to help with lesions in the mouth
  - h. Thrush- this is a yeast infection that can look like a white coating on your tongue. Thrush is usually caused by taking antibiotics, because they destroy the good as well as the bad bacteria. Ask the chemist/pharmacy if you are concerned about thrush

**WE ARE HERE TO HELP TOTAL HEALTH PHARMACY 018510544 OR [SMH@TULLYSPHARMACY.IE](mailto:SMH@TULLYSPHARMACY.IE)**