

Children's Speech and Language Therapy Drooling Advice and Saliva Control

Speech and Language Therapists do not work on saliva control. See general advice below.

Saliva (spit) helps us to:

- clean our mouths
- taste food and drink
- get food ready for swallowing and digesting



Young children and some older children may drool a lot. They do not start to control drooling until they can:

- keep their head upright
- keep their mouth closed
- feel the need to swallow

The amount of saliva made can be affected by:

- how much they drink
- chewing; more saliva is made when chewing
- eating or drinking foods with citrus flavours like oranges
- time of the day
- posture; more saliva is made when stood up
- taking medicine or being unwell
- being near food
- concentrating; having your mouth open during an activity may increase drooling

How to help your child manage drooling

It will take your child time to control drooling.

- **Do not wipe** your child's mouth. This makes more saliva.
- Do firm dabs to get rid of drool.
- Tell your child before you dab. Do not dab it away without warning.
- Encourage your child to keep their lips closed. Your child will need reminding to do this.
- Encourage your child to keep their head upright.

If they are getting sore lips and chin, you can help by using a barrier cream. If you think your child is having lots of difficulties controlling drooling, speak to your doctor.

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