

# Winterize your smile

Bundling up in warm winter woolies keeps your body from getting chilled. But protecting your mouth is just as important. When it's cold and dry outside, common oral health problems can worsen. Here are tips to keep your entire mouth healthy.

- **Chapped lips:** Lip balm with SPF can protect and heal the delicate skin on your lips. Drinking water also keeps your skin hydrated with the added benefit of relieving dry mouth. Using a humidifier in your home can add extra moisture to the air.
- **Dry mouth:** Certain medications and treatments can cause dry mouth, putting you at greater risk of cavities. The best remedy is drinking lots of water. Sucking on sugar-free candies, chewing sugar-free gum, or using saliva substitutes can also help.
- **Sensitive teeth:** If the protective enamel on your teeth is worn away, sensitive tissue called dentin is exposed. So, anything hot or cold that touches it – like a big breath of chilly air – really hurts. Using a fluoride toothpaste for sensitive teeth can help protect dentin.
- **TMJ Disorder:** Clenching and grinding your teeth can cause jaw, face, head, and neck pain. Your dentist may recommend a night guard, relaxation techniques, or medication. To minimize jaw tension in the cold weather, wrap your neck and chin up toasty in a scarf.