

# Dribbling

'Drooling' and 'dribbling' are different names for the same thing, which is when saliva, drool or dribble escapes from the mouth usually as a result of the child not swallowing often enough.



If your child begins to dribble, encourage them to dab around their mouth with a tissue NOT wipe.

Dabbing will help to reduce dribbling but wiping encourages more saliva.

Contact us:

01752 434844

[www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk](http://www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk)

## TOP TIPS

Dribbling is more likely to occur if your child:

- Keeps her head down a lot, as any dribble is likely to flow out, and keeps her lips apart much of the time.
- Breathes through her mouth. This may be a habit or because your child cannot breathe through her nose because it is blocked.
- Has frequent colds or allergies that block her nose.
- Has large or infected tonsils which make swallowing – including swallowing saliva – difficult.
- Has any eating or drinking difficulties which make swallowing difficult.
- Has a mouth infection and/or dental caries (tooth decay) both of which are likely to increase the amount of saliva produced.
- Is taking medicine, as some increase the production of saliva.
- Uses a dummy or sucks her thumb or fingers.
- Continues to use a bottle with a teat to suck on and for drinking, or uses an 'anyway up' cup.

# More information

## What can you do to help reduce dribbling?

- Encourage your child to keep her head upright and lips together when not talking.
- Regularly remind your child to put her lips together and swallow. If she does not understand what you mean, show her.
- While keeping her lips together, see how long your child can breathe through her nose before she opens her lips. Practice this regularly.
- Show your child how to blow her nose and encourage her to do so, especially when she has a cold.
- Reduce use of dummy, thumb or finger sucking; try to restrict dummy use to sleep periods only.
- Encourage your child to brush her teeth, at least each morning and evening, and take your child to the dentist regularly to help keep her teeth healthy.
- Encourage your child to eat a variety of foods of different textures, not just soft food. If your child can only manage soft food, try to gradually increase the range of textures.

- Encourage your child to drink from an open cup rather than a bottle.
- Do not use an 'anyway up' cup as this encourages sucking rather than more mature drinking.

