



Oral Health: What You Need to Know When Caring for Someone's Teeth

ORAL HEALTH

ROUTINE ORAL CARE

- See the dentist regularly at least two times per year to help prevent infections or other dental problems.
 - Non-medical emergency transportation services to dental offices may be available (see resources below).
 - Teledentistry or mobile dentistry appointments may be available.
- Brush teeth with fluoride toothpaste twice a day:
 - Brush after breakfast and before bed.
 - Use a soft bristle manual toothbrush.
 - Use of an electric or double-sided toothbrush can also help.
 - Keep a consistent routine at similar times and place every day.
 - Use the two-toothbrush method or a foam mouth rest to hold the mouth open while brushing the opposite side of the mouth.
- Angle the toothbrush towards the gumline to clean the teeth and gums.
- Brush teeth gently using small circular motions on all surfaces of each tooth.
- Brush the tongue to prevent bad breath and bacteria build up.
- Replace toothbrush every three months or sooner after being sick.



HEALTHY HABITS

NUTRITION

- Limit sugar. Sugar and bacteria create acids that dissolves teeth and damages gums.
- Watch for hidden sugar in foods and medications.
- Rinse mouth with water after meals, snacks, or drinking beverages that have sugar.



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BRUSHING

- Brush teeth with fluoride toothpaste twice a day.
- A proxy brush may be used between teeth with spaces.
- Brush after breakfast and before bed.

FLOSSING

- Clean between teeth daily.
- Use a floss holder to help clean between any teeth that touch.



DENTURE CARE

- Remove dentures at night and brush them before putting them into a cup of water (ask the dentist if denture cleaning tablets should be used).
- Brush dentures with soap and water and avoid using toothpaste or abrasive agents.
- Rinse and brush dentures again before placing them in the mouth.
- Keep dentures in water when not in the mouth. Do not use hot water and change the water in the cup daily.

WHAT IS A HEALTHY MOUTH?

- Pink and firm gums that fits tightly around the teeth.
- No redness, swelling, or bleeding gums.



WHAT IS AN UNHEALTHY MOUTH?

- Cracks at the corners of the mouth (possible fungal infection).
- Teeth with holes in them.
- Pain, redness, swelling, sores, or bleeding gums.
- Dry mouth, reduced saliva flow.



Resources:

- American Dental Association: <https://www.mouthhealthy.org/life-stages/adults>
- Smile Habits OC: www.smilehabitsoc.org/older-adults-seniors-65-years/
- Transportation Assistance:
https://smilehabitsoc.org/older-adults-seniors-65-years/see-your-dentist/#ride_services/
- Caregivers Guide: <https://www.mouthhealthy.org/life-stages/adults/caregivers-guide-adults-over-60>

