

TIPS FOR A HEALTHY MOUTH





HEALTHY TIPS

■ Excellent Homecare Habits

Whether you prefer to brush or floss first is irrelevant – as long as you do them both, and do them well. Brushing a minimum of two times each day with a soft or electric toothbrush and flossing at least once per day removes the plaque and bacterial buildup that accumulates around the clock. If you do choose to brush first and then floss, be sure follow with a rinse of either water or antibacterial mouthwash.

■ Regular Dental Visits

A large part of keeping a healthy mouth is to maintain regular dental exams and cleanings, and to receive any necessary dental treatment. Your dental professional will determine your recommended intervals for cleanings and exams based on your individual needs.

■ Avoid the Use of Tobacco Products

The use of tobacco carries significant risk not only of oral cancer, but also periodontal disease, gum recession, and

tooth discoloration. Tobacco use frequently masks symptoms of oral disease, so quitting today can be an excellent way to begin maintaining a healthier mouth.

■ Self-Oral Cancer Exams

Whether or not you drink alcohol, use tobacco, or are at risk for oral cancer via other factors, conducting periodic self-oral cancer exams is important for everyone. Your dentist will examine for signs of oral cancer on a yearly basis, but you often have the ability to catch suspicious areas between visits by conducting your own self-oral cancer examinations at home. Start looking at your mouth regularly so that you become familiar with your oral structures. If you notice anything that looks suspicious or out of the ordinary in any way, see your dentist immediately for an evaluation.

■ Diet and Nutrition

Diet and nutrition together play a vital role

in a healthy mouth and healthy body. Eating a well-balanced diet with the right amount of nutrients along with moderating foods and beverages that do not contribute to overall health can go a long way in helping your body fight system-wide infection, including oral conditions. Additionally, research has indicated that consuming xylitol in the form of chewing gum or hard candies can reduce the incidence of tooth decay.

■ Awareness and Education

The more you know and understand about your mouth and body, the better you can apply healthy habits to everyday living. Being aware of the signs and symptoms of oral diseases and seeking treatment as soon as possible are crucial for keeping your teeth and gums healthy. Educating yourself about diseases of the mouth and how systemic health affects the oral environment can provide a foundation to help you maintain a healthier mouth for the rest of your life.



▶ DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that flossing can increase your lifespan? Taking the time to commit daily to this valuable habit can add years to your life, according to Michael Roizen, M.D., author of the “RealAge” series of books. Daily flossing reduces the number of harmful bacteria that reside between the teeth and gums – the same organisms that place individuals at greater risk for heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and other systemic health conditions by entering the bloodstream through diseased gum tissues. Want a healthy mouth? Start by getting into the habit of flossing daily.