

Tips for Good Oral Health



Five Steps to a Healthy Smile

1. Brush your teeth twice a day using a soft bristled toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste.
2. Get a new toothbrush every 3 months.
3. Floss your teeth every day to clean between your teeth where a toothbrush cannot reach.
4. See a dentist at least once a year, even if you have no natural teeth or wear dentures.
5. Drink plenty of water, chew sugarless gum, do not use tobacco products, and limit sugary and alcoholic drinks.

Reasons to See Your Dentist at Least Once a Year

- Cleaning removes stains and plaque from your teeth
- Check for early signs of cancer in your mouth
- Check to make sure your dentures are fitting okay
- Identify problems before they become serious and cause pain or infection
- Help prevent tooth loss due to loose teeth, cavities, infection, or gum disease
- Help check for other medical problems, such as high blood pressure and diabetes
- Check for damage caused by bad habits such as chewing on ice, biting your nails, grinding your teeth and smoking



When to Contact Your Dentist with Concerns

- Chipped tooth
- Constant dull tooth pain
- Gums that bleed when you brush
- Red, tender, or swollen gums or sensitive teeth
- Cracked filling or a cap that comes off a tooth
- Problems with chewing or swallowing
- Changes in the way your dentures fit
- Sores in your mouth that do not heal
- Bad breath or a bad taste in your mouth that does not go away after brushing your teeth

TIP:

Most dentists leave an emergency number on their answering machine message for you to call if you have a serious dental problem after their business hours.

When to Call Your Dentist Right Away and Not Wait

- Broken tooth
- Loose or knocked out tooth
- Bleeding that will not stop
- Very painful or throbbing toothache
- Swollen cheek or painful swelling in your cheek or neck
- White bump on your gum that is getting bigger

When to Go to the Hospital Emergency Room

- When you are unable to reach your dentist after hours and have severe symptoms or pain
- Jaw fractures or dislocation
- Swelling that visibly spreads across the face and down the neck
- Serious tears, cuts, or punctures inside the cheeks, lips, or tongue
- Heavy bleeding in your mouth that will not stop
- If you have injured your head and damaged your teeth and jaw

[More Information and Resources on Back](#)

Finding a Dentist

If you need help finding a dentist or are having problems getting an appointment with your dentist, please call Member Services at 1-866-398-9419, TTY/TDD users call 711.

Transportation Assistance

RideConnect offers Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) to and from dental appointments to qualified members for covered services. For more information, call Member Services at 1-866-567-7242, TTY/TDD users call 1-800-627-3529 or 711.

Oral Health Resources

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/dental/art-20047475?p=1>

http://seniorsoralhealth.org/oral-hygiene-guidelines-preventing-dental-disease/?doing_wp_cron=1498146603.2632050514221191406250

<http://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/dental-care-concerns/dental-emergencies>

<https://data.web.health.state.mn.us/web/mndata/oral-health>

<https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/basics/adult-oral-health/tips.html>



Member Services 1-866-567-7242 ♦ TTY 1-800-627-3529 or 711

Hours of Service: Feb. 15 to Sept. 30, M-F, 8 am to 8 pm;

Oct. 1 to Feb. 14, 7 days a week, 8 am to 8 pm

Visit or website: www.mnscha.org

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