

What is Good Oral Hygiene?

Good Oral hygiene results in a mouth that looks and smells healthy. This means:

- Your teeth are clean and free of debris
- Gums are firmly held against teeth and do not hurt or bleed when you brush or floss
- Bad breath is not a constant problem.

If your gums do hurt or bleed while brushing or flossing, or you are experiencing persistent bad breath, see your dentist. Any of these conditions may indicate a problem.

Your dental professional can help you learn good oral hygiene techniques and can help point out areas of your mouth that may require extra attention during brushing and flossing.

How is good oral hygiene practiced?

Maintaining good oral hygiene is one of the most important things you can do for your teeth and gums. Healthy teeth not only enable you to look and feel good, they make it possible to eat and speak properly. Good oral health is important to your overall well-being.

Daily preventive care, including proper brushing and flossing, will help stop problems before they develop. It is much less painful, expensive, and worrisome than treating conditions that have been allowed to progress.

In between regular visits to the dentist, there are simple steps that each of us can take to greatly decrease the risk of developing tooth decay, gum disease and other dental problems. These include:

- Brushing thoroughly twice a day and flossing daily
- Eating a balanced diet and limiting snacks between meals
- Using dental products that contain fluoride, including toothpaste
- Rinsing with a fluoride mouth rinse if your dentist tells you to
- Making sure that children under 12 drink fluoridated water or take a fluoride supplement if they live in a non-fluoridated area.

Proper Brushing Technique



Tilt the brush at a 45° angle against the gum line and sweep or roll the brush away from the gum line.

Gently brush the outside, inside and chewing surface of each tooth using short back-and-forth strokes.

Gently brush your tongue to remove bacteria and freshen breath.

Proper Flossing Technique



Use about 18" of floss, leaving an inch or two to work with.

Gently follow the curves of your teeth.

Be sure to clean beneath the gum line, but avoid the floss on the gums.