



## Healthy Smiles for Adults

Your teeth are meant to last a lifetime. But germs and bacteria can build up in the mouth, causing soft, black spots on the teeth (tooth decay) and red, puffy gums that bleed easily (gum disease). These germs can also move through your body and affect other organs like your heart and lungs. Taking good care of your teeth and seeing your dentist will help keep your mouth and your body healthy.

### Brush Your Teeth Every Day

- Brush after meals and snacks - at least twice a day.
- Use fluoride toothpaste. Fluoride helps prevent tooth decay.
- Brush your teeth gently with a soft toothbrush.
- Brush your teeth for 3 to 5 minutes each time.
- Get a new toothbrush every 2 to 3 months.
- Brush your tongue to reduce bad breath.



### Floss Your Teeth Once Every Day

- Use dental floss to go where your toothbrush can't.
- Floss between the teeth and below the gums to remove plaque.
- Be gentle so you don't hurt your gums.

### Don't Smoke

Quit smoking and chewing tobacco to reduce your risk of mouth cancers, yellow teeth, bad breath and other problems. Talk to your doctor if you need help quitting.

### Eat Right

- Eat healthy foods like raw fruits and vegetables, cheese, yogurt and milk to help keep your mouth healthy.
- Limit soda and other sugary foods that can stick to your teeth.

### See your dentist twice a year

Don't wait until you have pain to see your dentist! Your teeth may be at risk long before you know it. Talk to your dentist about your overall health and lifestyle, including whether:

- You have diabetes, or other long-term diseases
- You play contact sports
- You clench or grind your teeth
- Your jaw pops or cracks when you yawn and chew

***If you have any questions, be sure to ask your dentist.***