



# **Dental Hygiene Guide for a Healthy Teeth and Bright Smile**

# ABSTRACT

Maintaining good dental hygiene is essential for overall health and confidence. This guide outlines the key practices for keeping teeth healthy and smiles bright, including proper brushing and flossing techniques, dietary tips, and the importance of regular dental checkups. Whether you're looking to improve your current routine or start fresh, this resource provides practical advice for all ages.

# INTRODUCTION

A healthy smile is more than just an attractive feature—it's a reflection of good oral health and self-care. Daily dental hygiene habits play a vital role in preventing cavities, gum disease, and other oral health issues. In this guide, we'll explore the fundamentals of effective dental care, from choosing the right toothbrush to understanding how lifestyle choices impact your teeth. With a few simple, consistent steps, you can protect your teeth and maintain a bright, confident smile for life.

## I. Caring for Your Teeth and Gums

With proper care, your teeth and gums can stay healthy throughout your life. The healthier your teeth and gums are, the less risk you have for tooth decay and gum disease.



How Should I Care for My Teeth and Gums?

There are five basic steps to caring for teeth and gums:

1. Brushing
2. Flossing
3. Rinsing
4. Eating right
5. Visiting the dentist

To keep your teeth and gums healthy, it's important to have regular check-ups and professional cleanings. You should also see your dentist if you have pain in your teeth, pain in your mouth, or bleeding, swollen gums.

### Tips for Brushing Teeth

Brush at least twice a day. If you can, brush after every meal. Ideally wait 30 minutes after eating; this will allow any enamel that softened from acid during eating to re-harden and not get brushed away. Brushing removes plaque, a film of bacteria that clings to teeth. When bacteria in plaque come into contact with food, they produce acids. These acids lead to cavities. To brush:

- Place a pea-sized dab of fluoride toothpaste on the head of the toothbrush. (Use a soft toothbrush.)
- Place the toothbrush against the teeth at a 45-degree angle up to the gum line.
- Move the brush across the teeth using a small circular motion. Continue with this motion cleaning one tooth at a time. Keep the tips of the bristles against the gum line. Avoid pressing so hard that the bristles lie flat against the teeth. (Only the tips of the toothbrush clean the teeth.) Let the bristles reach into spaces between teeth.
- Brush across the top of the chewing surfaces of the teeth. Make sure the bristles get into the grooves and crevices.
- Use the same small circular motion to clean the backside of the upper and lower teeth – the side that faces the tongue.
- To clean the inside of the bottom front teeth, angle the head in an up-and-down position toward the bottom inside of the mouth and move the toothbrush in a small circle.
- For the inside of the top front teeth, angle the brush in an up-and-down position with the tip of the head pointing toward the roof of the mouth. Move the toothbrush in a small circle.

- Give your tongue a few gentle brush strokes, brushing from the back of your tongue forward. Do not scrub. This helps remove bacteria and freshens your breath.
- After brushing your teeth for 2 to 3 minutes, rinse your mouth with water.
- Replace your toothbrush with a new one every 3 to 4 months.

You can wear down your enamel if you brush too fast and hard. Hold a brush with a soft bristle at about a 45-degree angle to your gums. Then move it back and forth in short, gentle strokes, about the distance of one tooth.



Wait for up to an hour after eating sweets or citrus fruits before you brush your teeth. Acidic foods can soften enamel and may make it easier for you to damage it.

## 5 Ways to Beat Bad Breath

Combat stinky breath with these simple dental hygiene reminders.

## Tips for Flossing Your Teeth

Floss teeth at least once a day. Flossing gets rid of food and plaque between the teeth, where your toothbrush cannot reach. If plaque stays between teeth, it can harden into tartar, which must be removed by a dentist or hygienist. To floss:

- Remove about an 18-inch strip of floss from the dispenser.

- Wind the floss around the middle fingers of each hand, leaving a 1-inch section open for flossing. Floss the top teeth first, then the bottom.
- Place the floss in your mouth and use your index fingers to push the floss between the teeth. Be careful not to push too hard and injure the gums.
- Move the floss up and down against the tooth and up and around the gum line. The floss should form a C-shape around the tooth as you floss.
- Floss between each tooth as well as behind the back teeth.
- Use a clean section of floss as needed, and take up used floss by winding it around the fingers.

### Tips for Rinsing Your Mouth

Mouthwashes do more than just freshen your breath. Rinse with an antiseptic mouthwash at least once a day to kill bacteria that cause plaque and early gum disease. A fluoride rinse can help prevent tooth decay and cavities. Some rinses can do both.



- It doesn't matter if you rinse before or after you brush.
- Swish the mouthwash in your mouth for 30 to 60 seconds.

### Eating Right for Dental Health

For good dental health, eat a variety of foods, but minimize those that contain sugars and starches. These foods produce the most acids in the mouth, and the longer they stay in the mouth, the more they can damage the teeth. Hard "sucking candies" are especially harmful because they stay in the mouth a long time.

Snacking on sugary foods can lead to tooth decay, because most people don't brush after snacks. Starchy snack foods, like potato chips, stick to the teeth. Avoid snacking on:

- Candies, cookies, cakes, and pie
- Sugary gum
- Crackers, breadsticks, and chips
- Dried fruits and raisins

Calcium in food counters acids in your mouth that cause decay. It also helps keep your bones and teeth strong.

Milk, cheese, and other dairy products help protect and strengthen enamel. Choose low-fat or fat-free items to help keep calories down. If you don't eat dairy, look for foods with calcium added.

## Visit Your Dentist Regularly

Visit your dentist at least once every 6 months. To keep your teeth and gums healthy, it's important to have regular check-ups and professional cleanings. You should also see your dentist if you have pain in your teeth, pain in your mouth, or bleeding, swollen gums.

You can also ask your dentist about dental sealants. A sealant is a material used to coat the top, chewing surfaces of the teeth. This coating protects the tooth from decay and usually lasts a long time, but can only be placed on a tooth without decay. It is usually placed on children's teeth as they get their permanent teeth.

If you have severe heartburn, stomach acids may escape and eventually reach your mouth, where they can erode (damage) enamel. The eating disorder bulimia, in which people vomit food after they eat, is another threat to your enamel. If you have either condition, talk to your doctor about treatment.

## Beware of Chlorinated Pools

When swimming pools aren't chlorinated properly, the water may become too acidic. When that happens, the water can damage teeth that get wet.

Check with the recreation center or gym where you swim to make sure the pool's chlorine levels are checked regularly. While swimming, keep your mouth closed so your teeth don't get wet.

## Watch Out for Dry Mouth

Saliva helps wash away food and bacteria that can lead to cavities. It also fights the effects of acidic foods. Drink water often to keep your mouth clean and moist.

If you exercise hard, be sure to rehydrate during and after your workout. Chewing sugarless gum or sucking on sugarless hard candy can also help keep saliva flowing in your mouth. Some medical conditions and medications can cause dry mouth. Talk to your doctor about treatments.

## Avoid Grinding Your Teeth

Some people grind their upper and lower teeth together, especially at night. Over time, it can wear down the enamel. Talk to your dentist if you've got the grinding habit. They may suggest a custom-fitted mouth guard that can protect your teeth.



## **II. Everything You Need For A Whiter, Brighter Smile This Year**

It was only a matter of time: Oral-care has been given the shiny wellness treatment title, with holistic-inspired formulas, natural ingredients and better-looking packaging that's also sustainable and plant-based. While there's a certain amount of Instagram flash and millennial trendiness to the latest oral-care movement, there's also some real innovation behind the products. Taking care of your teeth is not exactly fun—brushing and flossing is a chore for anyone—so there's plenty of room for improvement here. The new dental hygiene brands haven't reinvented the core pillars of good oral care (i.e. brushing, flossing, removing stains and rinsing with mouthwash) but they have upgraded the experience—and the results.



## Brüush

With smarter, modernized products by your bathroom sink, you might actually look forward to (or, at the very least, not “forget”) your twice-a-day cleaning and polishing. Think: electric toothbrushes that blast away stains with six different modes to comfort your gums, whitening strips that dissolve on your teeth minus any sticky residue, eco- and travel-friendly toothpaste and mouthwash designed in capsules you chew or mix with water, plaque-fighting floss made from soft (and nicely scented) coconut fibers.

Just like meditating or yoga, oral-care is actually a practice where you get out what you put in. If you stick with the routine, your teeth will look the way you want them to, whether that’s whitener, brighter, healthier or just not like you drink coffee and wine all day. And now you might enjoy the up-keep. Below, 10 hardworking oral-care essentials that get the job done with super-efficient results.

## Better Electric Toothbrushes

### Whiten With LED Light While You Brush



## Snow Teeth Whitening

### Snow LED Electric Toothbrush

Known for its innovative LED whitening mouthpiece, Snow now put that same technology in its newest electric toothbrush. The slim wand has four modes—clean, whiten, polish and sensitive—each of which produces different sensations. When in “whiten” mode, it emits wavelengths of blue light to increase the teeth-whitening process (without radiating heat). While it might not replace strips and trays, the brush aims to give your brightening routine an extra boost.

### Deep Clean And Detox Your Mouth



## Burst

### Burst Deep Cleaning Sonic Toothbrush

A celebrity favorite, Burst's colorful toothbrushes are powerful as they are pretty: The wand polishes your teeth with 33,000 sonic vibrations per minute and the charcoal-black bristles help lift away plaque. Compared to a manual brush, this one easily outperforms it—it's clinically proven to remove up to ten times more plaque for a healthier mouth.

### Banish Stains At Home And On The Go



## Brüush

### Brüush Black Electric Toothbrush

Designed with dentists and built with sonic technology, Brüush gets all the details right. The electric brush removes plaque and stains, has a built-in two-minute timer, six cleaning modes, extra-soft bristles and travels easily—it has a four-week battery life and comes with a USB power adapter and charger and compact travel case.

### Smarter Whitening Strips And Kits

### Brighten And Freshen Your Breath



## Moon Dissolving Whitening Strips

Moon recently teamed up with Kendall Jenner to create a teeth brightening pen—which promptly sold out. The brand's popular whitening strips aim to provide a more thorough and long-lasting effect: Made with hydrogen peroxide and antioxidants (and free of parabens), the strips sit on your teeth for 15 minutes and then naturally dissolve, leaving you with a minty, breath-freshening effect. Each pack comes with 56 strips, which you can apply up to two times a day for 14 days.

## Whiten Without Sensitivity



## Vvardis Teeth Whitening Collection

Founded in Switzerland by dentist sisters Haleh and Golnar Abivardi, Vvardis recently arrived Stateside, with its chic, understated aesthetic and patented Wx formula—which aims to whiten without causing sensitivity (and even works on crowns and veneers). This kit contains the Edelweiss toothpaste, Rheinholz toothbrush, Weissbad mouthwash and Aletsch gel, a peroxide-free liquid that you paint on and can whiten teeth up to ten shades, sans irritation.

## Fight Stains Instantly And Over Time



## Spotlight Oral Care Stripped Back Bundle

This bundle by Spotlight Oral Care—the popular oral care brand founded by practicing cosmetic dentists and sisters Lisa and Vanessa Creaven—contains everything you need to whiten, for a very reasonable price. There's a 14-day course of whitening strips, a gum oil to reduce sensitivity and a teeth whitening pen, a bestselling, on-the-go gel that contains hydrogen carbonate calcium to dissolve stains (rather than just temporarily cover them up).

## Eco-Friendly Toothpaste, Floss And Mouthwash

### Chew Your Toothpaste



### Bite Toothpaste Bits

Bite aims to reduce waste by eliminating tubes. Instead, this toothpaste comes in tablet form—just bite down, chew and brush. The “bits” contain natural ingredients, including coconut oil, guar gum, mint, bacteria-fighting xylitol and activated charcoal to tackle surface stains and freshen breath.

### Blast Away Plaque



## SmileDirectClub Pop-Up Water Flosser

Flossing just got way cooler. This cordless water system removes plaque between the teeth and below the gumline, making it 50% more effective than string floss. It's also travel-ready—the base collapses to just five inches— and has three pressure modes, normal, soft and pulse.

## Floss With Coconut



### Cocofloss 3-Piece Scented Floss

Packaged in compostable, refillable spools and woven with soft, textured threads, Cocofloss is designed to remove sticky, yellow plaque better than traditional “gliding” floss. It’s also infused with cleansing coconut oil and natural scents, such as strawberry, mint and fresh orange.

### Mix Up Your Mouthwash In Tablet Form



### ByHumankind Mouthwash

Unlike traditional mouthwash that burns and comes in a single-use plastic bottle, ByHumankind's tablets contain an alcohol-free blend of baking soda, pH-balancing tartaric acid, menthol and other natural ingredients. Each order contains 60 tablets: Just place one in the reusable glass cup, fill to the water level, swish in your mouth and spit. The cap houses the tablets, so you can easily stash the cup in your travel bag.

## **III. Guide to dental procedures**

### Key facts

- A dental procedure is anything that involves a dentist or dental practitioner working on your mouth.
- Dental procedures include: a filling or crown for your tooth, treatment for gum disease, straightening crowded teeth, dental surgery or having dentures made.
- Dental procedures can help you with pain, infection, an injury or other problems with your teeth or gums.

- Find out the benefits, risks and costs before you go ahead with a dental procedure.

What are dental procedures?

A dental procedure is anything that involves a dentist or dental practitioner working on your mouth.

Dental procedures can help with:

- pain
- infections
- injury
- deformity
- other problems with your mouth, teeth or gums

Dental procedures include:

- a filling
- an extraction (removing a tooth)
- putting a crown on a tooth
- treatment or surgery for periodontal (gum) disease
- straightening crowded teeth
- orthodontic treatments, like aligning your teeth, bite and jaws
- having a denture, dental implant or bridge made and fitted after losing teeth
- dental surgery or treatment after surgery

What are the different types of dentist or dental practitioner?

Most dentists in Australia are general dentists — they diagnose and treat diseases of the teeth, gums and mouth. Dentists must complete at least 4 years of study at a university. Dental specialists have further training.



Specialist dentists include:

- Orthodontists — that diagnose and treat crooked teeth, bad bites and poorly aligned jaws
- Endodontists — that specialise in treating problems inside your teeth
- Oral and maxillofacial surgeons — that specialise in surgical procedures of the teeth, mouth and jaw
- Paediatric dentists — that specialise in dental services for children
- Periodontists — that specialise in gum disease

### Are there other types of dental practitioners?

Yes, other types of dental practitioners are:

- dental hygienists
- oral health therapists
- dental therapists
- dental prosthetists

These dental practitioners must complete 2 or 3 years of study.

**Dental hygienists** diagnose and treat problems with the teeth mouth and gums. They provide education and preventive treatments.

**Oral health therapists** complete at least 3 years of study at a university. They can provide oral health education and basic dental and preventive services to all age groups.

**Dental therapists** provide oral health education and routine dental treatments for children. If they have completed further training, they can provide basic dental care for adults.

**Dental prosthetists** complete a diploma or university education program. They can provide dentures and mouthguards.

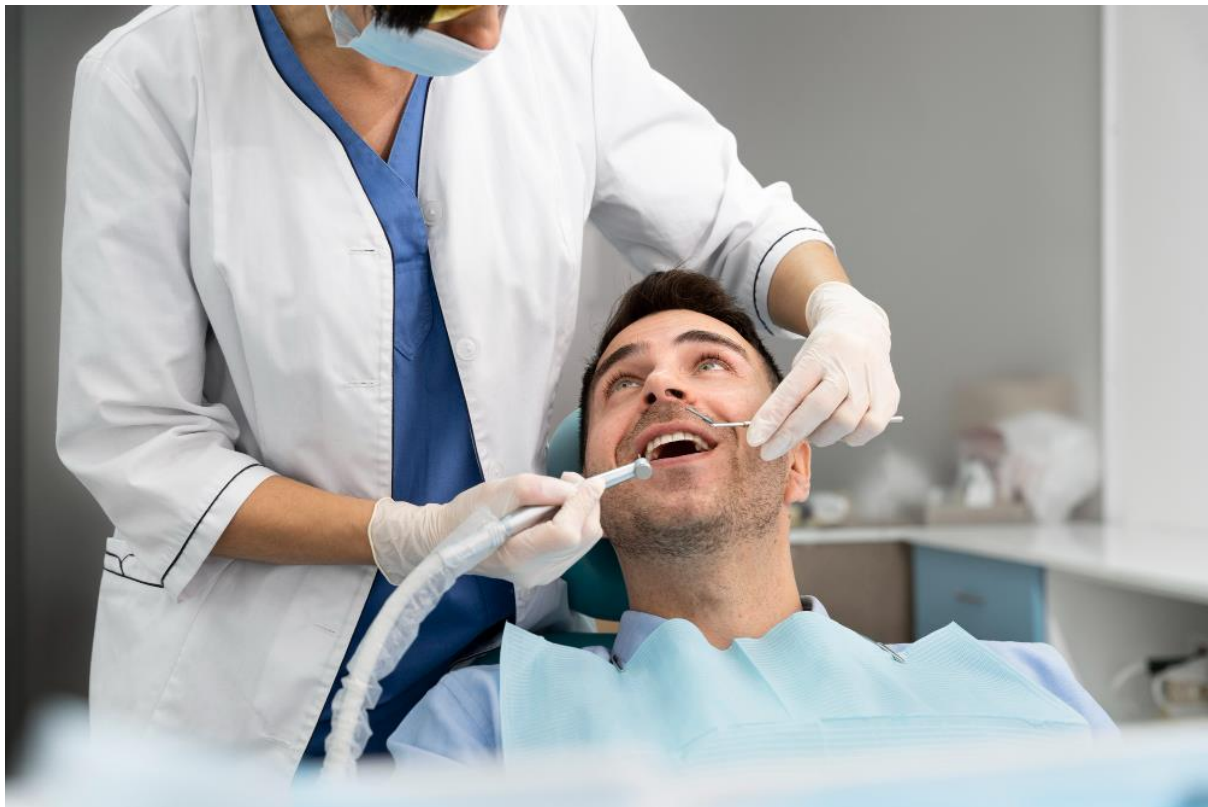
Dentists and dental practitioners must be registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Registration Agency.

What should I discuss with my dentist or dental practitioner before a procedure?

Your dentist or dental practitioner should explain clearly what your procedure involves. You need to agree to any treatment for you or your child.

They need to tell you how much they will charge before starting the treatment.

Tell your dentist or dental practitioner about any concerns that you have. Ask questions such as:



- How long will the procedure take?
- What will it cost?
- What are the risks and benefits?
- What happens if I don't have it done?
- What are the alternatives?

- Do I have a choice about what fillings are used?
- What should I expect after the procedure?
- Will I be in pain? How can I manage pain?
- What can I do to prevent future dental problems?

#### Government funding for children

The Australian Government's Child Dental Benefits Schedule (CDBS) can help you pay for the costs of basic dental services for your children.

The Child Dental Benefits Schedule provides up to \$1,052 per child over 2 calendar years. This amount goes up on 1 January each year.

Your child needs to be:

- aged between 0 and 17 years
- eligible for Medicare

You also need to be getting a government payment at least once a year. For example, Family Tax Benefit Part A.

The \$1,052 can be used to pay for:

- dental check ups
- x-rays
- cleaning
- fissure sealing
- fillings
- root canals
- extractions

The Child Dental Benefits Schedule does not cover:

- orthodontic work
- cosmetic dental work
- dental services in a hospital

Services Australia also has information in Arabic, Assyrian, Chinese, Dari, Korean, Persian (Farsi), Serbian, Tagalog, Turkish and Vietnamese.

#### Government funded clinics for adults

The government also funds certain public dental services for adults. Find out what public dental services are available in your state or territory.

How can I find the right dentist or dental practitioner?

Here are some things to do when searching for a dentist or dental practitioner:

- Ask your friends or family if they can recommend someone.
- Try the Australian Dental Association's Find a dentist search for dentists.

Check if the dentist or dental practitioner registered at the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency. Their registration record will also tell you if they speak a language in addition to English.

Call the practice and ask what you would pay for a full check-up and clean and what is included. An average check-up takes 20-25 minutes. It will include a look at your teeth, gums, inside your cheeks, palate, tongue and lips.

## IV. A Complete Guide To Getting A Smile Makeover

A smile has the power to win hearts and boost a person's image. A smiling face is considered beautiful and sociable, which attracts people and helps start conversations. Thus, most people are suggested to wear a smile to make a positive impression on others. It instils a feeling of optimism and adds charm to the personality. However, some people shy away from smiling because of dental problems that affect their laughter and confidence.



It can be distressing to suppress your smile or laughs when everyone is enjoying around you. It can make you seem like an arrogant or socially awkward person. Thus, it makes sense to get rid of dental problems with the help of cosmetic treatments that can make you the life of the party once again.

**Here is a complete guide to getting a smile makeover** that can help people with dental issues overcome their fears and reservations.

### 1. Dental Examination to Identify Problems

A dental examination is the first step of a smile makeover, and it must be performed by an expert dentist in Hope Island. The practitioner will check the teeth, gums, and jaw for hidden problems and apparent issues that must be resolved. If there is tooth decay, they might need a dental X-ray to detect the extent of damage. For other problems like crooked, chipped, yellow, discoloured, broken, or missing teeth, they will provide a treatment plan.

## 2. Teeth Whitening for A Beautiful Smile

Many people suffer from low self-esteem because of stained or yellow teeth. The reason behind the discolouration can be poor oral hygiene, excessive coffee, red wine and smoking. Teeth whitening can help bring back the lost shine of your teeth without any invasive procedure. It improves the smile aesthetics and boosts confidence. The procedure can be combined with other dental treatments for a complete smile makeover.

## 3. Aligners or Braces for Perfect Alignment

Crooked or misaligned teeth not only affect the smile of the person but also impact the bite. Thus, you must visit an orthodontist who can examine your teeth and advice the best option for bringing the teeth to their perfect position. Clear aligners are becoming popular lately because they are not apparently visible like metal braces. However, they need to be removed while eating and cleaned thoroughly every time. On the other hand, braces are fixed and can be challenging to clean and maintain. The practitioner will suggest the right orthodontic device based on the specific alignment problem.



## 4. Gum Contouring for A Stunning Smile

Gummy smiles can make one feel self-conscious or an easy target for jokes and taunts. The problem can be rectified by visiting your dentist in Hope Island, who will perform gingival sculpting to reshape the gum line and create the perfect smile. The procedure involves numbing the area where the gum line is uneven and then using a laser or a scalpel to remove the excess gum tissue. It ensures the teeth appear proportional and the gum line perfectly aligns.

## 5. Dental Bonding and Veneers for Charming Smiles

Dental bonding is recommended by dentists in Hope Island to beautify the smiles of people with chipped, cracked, and discoloured teeth. It is also helpful in covering gaps between teeth that make one look odd while smiling. Bonding involves applying a composite resin material to the affected teeth. The material is made to match the colour of the natural teeth, and the dentist smooths it to become inconspicuous.

Another cosmetic procedure that is used by practitioners to offer a smile makeover is the dental veneer. They can be made of porcelain or composite and restore chipped, discoloured and stained teeth. The procedure involves removing some part of the tooth enamel and covering it with a customised veneer to create a beautiful smile. They can last for up to 15 years if maintained carefully.

## 6. Dental Implants for Missing Teeth

Dental implants are necessary for those who have lost a tooth due to an accident, gum problem or tooth decay. They appear like natural teeth and are customised to create a perfect bridge that fills the gap made by the missing tooth. They can last a lifetime if cared for effectively and help to prevent bone loss.

The best advantage of dental implants is that they help build the most attractive smile, which can be affected by a missing tooth or teeth. They also maintain the facial structure by avoiding the sagging of the muscles around the jaw.

## 7. Maintaining a Smile Makeover

After the procedures have been completed, it is vital to maintain your smile aesthetics by following optimum oral hygiene through daily brushing and flossing. You can also add rinsing with an alcohol-free mouthwash to the routine to remove all the bacteria that are not removed through brushing. In addition, it is essential to avoid eating sticky, starchy and sugary foods and drinks that impact oral health.

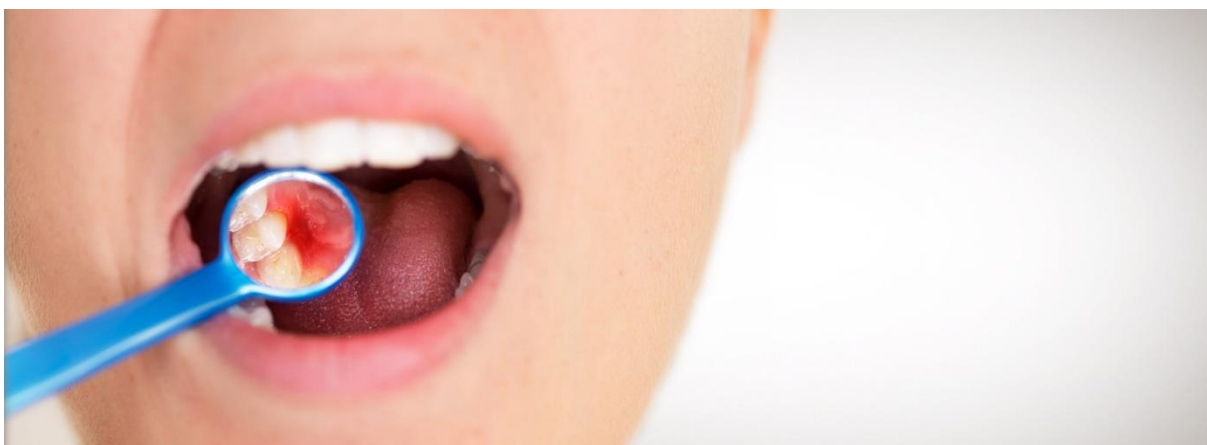


A smile makeover can give you the push you need to become self-confident and outgoing. It ensures that you can flash a perfect set of teeth and gums whenever you are happy and want to greet the other person amicably. So, if you think your smile is lacking in any way, visit your Hope Island dentist to get a makeover.

## **V. Tips for Preventing Oral Health Problems**

### Preventing Oral Health Problems

Good oral hygiene can help protect more than just your teeth. People with poor oral health may also have:



- self-esteem issues
- a harder time finding a job
- difficulty participating and performing well in school

- oral discomfort
- speech problems
- malnutrition
- swallowing problems

A neglected infection or untreated oral cancer can even be fatal. There are some universal ways to maintain your dental health, such as regularly visiting the dentist and regularly brushing and flossing your teeth. Some groups of people, though, may need to take extra precautions. Keep reading to learn more.

## Children

Early childhood caries (ECC), or baby bottle syndrome, is a distinctive pattern of tooth decay. When it first appears, you may notice white spots near the gum line. These spots will turn brown as the decay progresses. Early treatment is important to reduce the level of decay.

Sugars left on the teeth can lead to ECC. These sugars may come from milk, juice, or foods. Here are some tips for preventing ECC:

- Restrict bottle feeding to meal times.
- Don't put your baby to sleep with a bottle. The milk or juice that pools in the mouth will bathe teeth in the sugars on which bacteria feed.
- Before their teeth grow in, get your baby accustomed to regular oral care by wiping their gums twice per day with a clean, soft, thin cloth, such as a handkerchief.
- After your baby's teeth erupt, switch to a baby toothbrush moistened with water. Don't use toothpaste until your child is old enough to spit it out. Swallowing toothpaste while their teeth are developing can cause a condition called fluorosis, which occurs from absorbing too much fluoride and causes their teeth to look mottled or grainy.
- You should wean your child from the bottle by the time they're 1 year old. Introduce a sippy cup or other spill-proof cup with a valve.

## Women

Women have different dental concerns during various life stages.

### Teenage Years

When a young woman begins to menstruate, her periods may be accompanied by mouth sores or swollen gums.

### Early Adulthood

Women of childbearing age have an additional reason to practice good oral hygiene. Periodontal disease increases the risk of preterm birth with low birth weight.



## Pregnancy

During pregnancy, a spike in progesterone and other hormones can upset your body's normal balance. This can result in gingivitis, too little or too much saliva, or benign, tumor-like growths on your gums called granulomas. Frequent vomiting caused by morning sickness can encourage tooth decay by dissolving tooth enamel. The best way to prevent these problems is to practice good oral hygiene. Consult your dentist or doctor with any medical concerns.

Don't skip your dentist appointments while pregnant. It's safe for pregnant women to receive dental care. Just make sure you let your dentist know that you're pregnant.

## Menopause and Postmenopausal

When women reach menopause, estrogen deficiency puts them at risk for periodontal disease. Many also have burning mouth syndrome (BMS). This disorder is characterized by an unpleasant tingling sensation occasionally associated with changes in taste perception. The condition is treated with medicated creams or lozenges, or with oral medications.

## Older Adults

As you age, you can become less able to chew effectively, especially if you have missing teeth or ill-fitting dentures. You may take medications that cause dry mouth. This problem can cause difficulty swallowing, which may lead to malnutrition. In addition, having a dry mouth can allow bacteria to build up, causing bad breath, gum disease, and infection.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Trusted Source, 23 percent of adults aged 65 to 74 have severe periodontal disease. This is often a result of barriers to good oral hygiene, such as arthritis and memory impairment.

### Residents of Long-Term Care Facilities

Residents of long-term care facilities or other group homes include not only elderly adults but also children and adults with physical or mental disabilities. They often depend on caregivers for proper oral hygiene. This care is sometimes difficult to provide.

A resident may become agitated if they misunderstand the caregiver's intent. In fact, aggression among residents of long-term care facilities is most likely to be seen while personal care is being given, such as when a caregiver is assisting with tooth brushing. As a result, oral care may be rushed or skipped altogether.

Special measures, such as the use of physical restraints or medications, may be needed to allow the caregiver to proceed with the oral hygiene regimen.



### People with HIV or AIDS

People with HIV or AIDS are vulnerable to opportunistic infections of the oral cavity. A fuzzy white patch on the tongue called hairy leukoplakia is sometimes an early indication of an HIV or AIDS infection. In addition, people with HIV or AIDS may develop other fungal infections of the mouth, such as histoplasmosis, aspergillosis, and oral candidiasis.

### Tips for Good Oral Health

While some groups of people may need to pay extra attention to their oral health, everyone should practice good oral hygiene. Here are some tips to get you on the road to good oral health:

- Visit your dentist one to two times a year for a cleaning and checkup.
- Brush your teeth with a fluoride toothpaste a minimum of two times per day.
- Replace your toothbrush or toothbrush head every three to four months.
- Floss at least once per day.
- Brush your tongue to remove bacteria and freshen your breath.
- Some people will benefit from fluoride treatments and mouth rinses.

You should schedule an additional visit to your dentist if you notice any of the following:

- red, swollen gums, or gums that bleed
- extreme sensitivity to hot or cold
- difficulty chewing
- persistent bad breath
- a loose permanent tooth
- a persistent toothache
- an abscess

## CONCLUSION

Good dental hygiene is a lifelong commitment that pays off in both health and appearance. By practicing proper brushing and flossing, making smart dietary choices, and visiting your dentist regularly, you can significantly reduce your risk of dental problems. A bright, healthy smile is within reach—starting with the simple steps in this guide.

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