

Oral Health Advice

It is important to attend your dentist as regularly as they recommended; to check the health of your teeth and gums and subsequently allow us to provide any care necessary to help you keep your mouth healthy. This page gives some advice on how to prevent tooth decay, gum disease and oral cancer.

To Prevent Decay

- Sugar should not be added to weaning foods or drinks for babies.
- Medicines should be sugar free where possible.
- Parents/carers should brush or supervise toothbrushing of children less than 7 years old.
- As soon as teeth come through in the mouth, brush them twice daily:
 - Children less than 3 years old: use a smear of toothpaste with no less than 1,000ppm fluoride
 - Age 3-6 years: use a pea sized amount of more than 1,000ppm fluoride toothpaste
 - Adults should use 1350-1500ppm fluoride toothpaste.
- Brush last thing at night and on one other occasion each day.
- Spit out toothpaste, do not rinse after brushing.
- The frequency and amount of sugary food and drinks should be reduced.
- Avoid sugar containing foods and drinks at bedtime when saliva flow drops overnight which usually protects your teeth during the day.

To Prevent Gum Disease

- Remove plaque/bacteria/food debris effectively using methods shown by the dental team. This will help to prevent gum disease and tooth loss.
- Daily, effective plaque/bacteria/food debris removal is more important to gum health than tooth scaling and polishing by the clinical team.
- Brush the gum line and each tooth twice daily (before bed and at least on one other occasion).
- Use a small toothbrush head with soft-medium texture bristles.
- Clean daily between the teeth to below the gum line before toothbrushing:
 - For small spaces between teeth: use dental floss or tape
 - For larger spaces: use interdental or single-tufted brushes.
- Do not smoke. Smoking increases the risk of gum disease, reduces benefits of treatment and increases the chance of you losing your teeth.
- Patients with diabetes should try to maintain good diabetes control as they are at greater risk of developing gum disease and are less likely to benefit from gum treatment if their diabetes is not well controlled.

To Prevent Oral Cancer

Do not smoke or use smokeless tobacco (eg, paan, chewing tobacco, gutkha)

- Reduce alcohol consumption to moderate (recommended) levels:
 - Men should not regularly consume more than 3 to 4 units per day

- Women should not regularly consume more than 2 to 3 units per day
- “ Increase your intake of non-starchy vegetables and fruit.