



Healthy People • Dental

CELEBRATE NATIONAL SMILE MONTH

Good oral health can have so many wonderful life-changing benefits. From **greater self-confidence to better luck in careers and relationships**, a healthy smile can truly transform your visual appearance, the positivity of your mind-set, as well as improving the health of not only your mouth but your body too. As part of **National Smile Month**, here are some top tips covering all areas of your oral health, to help keep you smiling.

CARING FOR YOUR MOUTH

- Brush your teeth **last thing at night and at least one other time during the day** with a fluoride toothpaste.
- **Clean between your teeth** at least once a day using interdental brushes or floss.
- If you use mouthwash **don't use it directly after brushing** as you rinse away the fluoride from your toothpaste.
- **Quit smoking** to help reduce the chances of tooth staining, gum disease, tooth loss, and in more severe cases mouth cancer.
- **Make sure your toothpaste contains fluoride**; it helps strengthen tooth enamel making it more resistant to decay.
- Change your toothbrush every **two to three months or sooner** if it becomes worn as it will not clean the teeth properly.



REGULAR DENTAL CARE IS ESSENTIAL

VISITING THE DENTIST

- Visit your dentist regularly, as often as recommended.
- Some dentists may offer home visits for those housebound or have other difficulties visiting the office.
- If you are nervous about visiting the dentist, make sure they are aware of the reason so they can improve your experience.
- Your dentist will carry out a visual mouth cancer check during your checkup.
- Visit a dental hygienist for excellent tips and advice on preventing dental problems.

Source: nationalsmilemonth.org



DIET AND YOUR ORAL HEALTH

- Chew sugar-free gum after eating or drinking to help protect your teeth and gums between meals.
- Wait an hour after eating or drinking before brushing as the enamel will be softened and you could be brushing away tiny particles.
- A diet rich in vitamins, minerals, and fresh fruit and vegetables can help prevent gum disease.
- Finishing a meal with a cube of cheese is a great, and tasty, way to reduce the effect of acids from the foods damaging your teeth.

- Avoid snacking and try to only have sugary foods and drinks at mealtimes, reducing the time your teeth come under attack.
- If you have a sweet tooth, try to choose sugar-free sweets and drinks which contain xylitol as it can actively contribute to your oral health.

CHILDREN'S ORAL HEALTH

- Weaning your baby off the bottle early can help avoid dental problems.
- Children up to three years old should use a smear of toothpaste with a fluoride level of no less than 1000ppm (parts per million). After age three, use a toothpaste with 1350-1500ppm.
- Brush along to a song to ensure children are brushing long enough.