



ORAL HEALTH

Brought to you by Kelley-Ross Pharmacy Group

Why do we care about oral health?

Our oral health is important so we can get energy from our food, communicate with other people, and keep our body protected from infections. Even though we think of our oral health as separate from the rest of our body, it is all connected.

Poor oral health is associated with other medical conditions, such as **diabetes**, **pneumonia**, and **heart disease**. Here are some tips and tricks to keep our smiles looking bright and healthy!

Flossing

The ADA tells us how to floss our teeth at least once daily:



Use about 18 inches of floss wound around one of your middle fingers, with the rest wound around the opposite middle finger.



Hold the floss tightly between the thumbs and forefingers and gently insert it between the teeth.



Curve the floss into a "C" shape against the side of the tooth.



Rub the floss gently up and down, keeping it pressed against the tooth. Don't jerk or snap the floss.



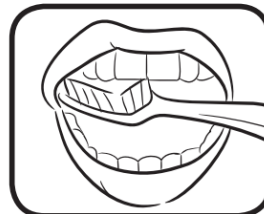
Floss all your teeth. Don't forget to floss behind your back teeth.

Brushing

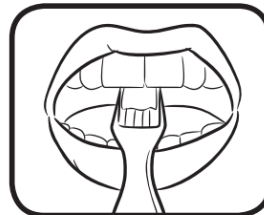
The ADA tells us how to brush our teeth at least twice daily:



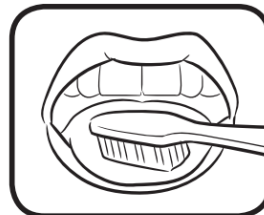
Place a toothbrush at a 45-degree angle to the gums.



Move the brush back and forth gently in short strokes.



To clean the inside surface of the front teeth, tilt the brush vertically and make several up-and-down strokes.



Brush your tongue to remove bacteria and keep your breath fresh.



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Dry Mouth

Dry mouth is caused by a lack of saliva production.

Why do we need saliva?

Saliva is important because it helps keep our mouth clean, protects our teeth from breaking down, and enables us to chew and digest food. Saliva also coats our mouth to protect us from infection.

What are the symptoms?

- A dry, sticky, or burning feeling in the mouth
- Trouble chewing, tasting, or swallowing food
- Dry or sore throat
- Cracked or peeling lips
- Sores or an infection in your mouth
- Bad breath
- Inability to retain dentures that once fit

What causes dry mouth?

The most common cause of dry mouth is the use of certain medications!

Medications that Worsen Dry Mouth

Over 400 of the most commonly prescribed medications can contribute to dry mouth. These include medications you take for:

- Allergies, such as diphenhydramine
- Heart health, such as a water pill or blood pressure medication
- Mental health, such as amitriptyline
- Urinary problems, such as tolterodine
- Nausea, such as scopolamine

Ask your doctor or pharmacist about medications on your list.

What can you do about dry mouth?

Good news: if you have dry mouth, there are many things you can do to help!



Stay hydrated with small sips of water throughout the day.



Brush your teeth twice daily and floss once daily.



Avoid products that are dehydrating, such as smoking, coffee, and alcohol.



Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about artificial saliva products, such as Biotene.



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Denture 101

- According to ADA, there are 36 million Americans that do not have any teeth. About 90% of these people have dentures.
- Dentures are not only beneficial for self-esteem and appearance, but also make eating and speaking easier.
- There are different kinds of dentures. Conventional dentures replace all your teeth, while overdentures are used when some of your natural teeth can be preserved.

Denture Care

Place your dentures in water or a denture cleanser solution when not in use to keep them moist and fitting properly.



Brush dentures daily with a denture cleanser to reduce buildup of harmful bacteria or fungi that can lead to infection.

Only use denture cleansers that have the ADA acceptance seal on the package. This means these products are safe and effective for use!



Red Flags

It is time to get new dentures if:

- They no longer stay in place on their own, especially when eating, drinking, or socializing
- You notice redness, bumps, or sores in your mouth where your dentures sit
- The dentures appear broken or damaged
- It has been 5 years since your dentures were made!

How to find a dentist:

- If you have Apple Health:
<https://fortress.wa.gov/hca/plfindaprovider/>
- For everyone:
<https://dentistlink.org/> or call **844-888-5465**