oral health

celebrate your smile

Brush up on oral care facts for overall health worth smiling about
ENSURING HEALTHY SMILES FOR EVERYONE

Rite Aid and the American Dental Association (ADA) are proud to bring you this oral health guide filled with information and tips aimed at promoting good dental habits.

At Rite Aid, we have the products you need to put these good dental habits into practice. And our pharmacists are always ready to answer your questions about oral health.

The ADA is the leading source of oral health-related information for dentists and their patients. The organization is always working to improve the public’s oral health, from providing patient education materials to ensuring product safety and effectiveness through the ADA Seal Program. Visit www.ada.org to learn more.

Read on to learn how you can practice good oral care and protect your overall health. Start good dental habits now to ensure a happy and healthy smile in the future!

ADA American Dental Association®
America’s leading advocate for oral health

The American Dental Association is committed to providing comprehensive oral care information and education and does not endorse any particular pharmacy or commercial product.

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![Image of toothbrush and dental care products]
HEALTHY TEETH AND GUMS HELP PROTECT YOUR WHOLE BODY

They say your eyes are the windows to your soul. That may be true, but your mouth also offers a glimpse into your body’s inner workings. Oral health is connected to overall health for everyone, but it can be especially important when it comes to heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.

Heart problems and gum disease
Gum disease may raise the risk for heart disease and stroke. The problem likely starts with the bacteria that lurk in your gums causing inflammation. Studies suggest that the inflammation sets off a chain of events in the body that could damage the heart and blood vessels. Researchers continue to study the link between gum disease and cardiovascular disease, but one thing is for sure: You can keep your mouth healthy by brushing and flossing daily.

Diabetes and dental health
People with diabetes need to pay extra attention to their dental health. If you have diabetes, you’re more susceptible to infection and less equipped to fight the bacteria that invade your mouth. This puts you at a higher risk for tooth loss, gum disease, and other mouth troubles. Daily brushing and flossing, regular dental checkups, and good blood glucose control are the best defense against the oral health complications of diabetes.

Keep your dentist informed about any medical conditions you have and medications you take to get the best treatment possible.
TAKE ACTION AGAINST TOOTH DECAY AND GUM DISEASE

We all host bacteria in our mouths that make us potential targets for tooth decay and gum disease. But there’s a lot you can do to keep your mouth healthy.

The problem with plaque
Tooth decay happens when sugary foods are left on the teeth. Plaque, a sticky film of bacteria that builds up on your teeth, thrives on these foods and produces acids that can eventually destroy tooth enamel, causing tooth decay.

Plaque can also produce toxins that irritate your gums. Swollen, red, and bleeding gums may be signs of gum disease, called gingivitis. Left untreated, gingivitis can worsen and become periodontitis, a more serious form of gum disease. Periodontitis is when gums pull away from the teeth, causing pockets that can become infected. Teeth can become loose and may have to be removed.

Four steps to a healthy mouth
Thankfully, tooth decay and gum disease can be prevented with these four steps:

1. Brush your teeth twice a day with fluoridated toothpaste.
2. Floss daily.
3. Eat a well-balanced diet and limit or eliminate sugary snacks.
4. See your dentist regularly for checkups and professional cleanings.

Dental sealants can help prevent tooth decay by acting as a barrier when applied to the pits and grooves of the chewing surfaces of back teeth. Ask your dentist if your child is a candidate for sealants.

QUICK FACTS ON FLUORIDE

Studies show that water fluoridation reduces tooth decay by 20 to 40 percent in both children and adults. In fact, it’s the most effective public health measure to prevent tooth decay. Ask your dentist about fluoride sources and discuss your specific needs. For children living in areas without optimal fluoride levels in the water, dietary fluoride supplements (tablets, drops, or lozenges) are available by prescription.
FLOSSING AND BRUSHING 101

Brushing and flossing daily help keep plaque at bay. But simply running a toothbrush over your teeth isn’t enough. To fight plaque, you must be thorough. Practice the following good habits each day.

Step-by-step guide to flossing
Floss at least once a day. Break off about 18 inches of floss and wind most of it around one of your middle fingers. Wind the rest around your opposite middle finger. You’ll spool the used floss onto this finger as you go. Hold the floss tightly between your thumbs and index fingers and gently guide it between your teeth. At the gum line, curve the floss into a C shape tightly against one tooth. Gently move the floss up and down away from the gum. Repeat for each tooth — and don’t forget the back side of your last tooth.

Brushing up
Brush your teeth for at least two minutes with a soft-bristled toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste at least twice a day. Place your toothbrush at a 45-degree angle against the gums. Gently brush back and forth in small circular motions, covering the outsides, insides, and chewing surfaces of your teeth, as well as the gum line. Brush your tongue to remove bacteria and freshen breath.

Visit www.riteaid.com/oralcare to view demos on flossing and brushing.
HELPFUL TOOLS FOR A HEALTHY SMILE

You know that good oral hygiene starts with the right dental care products, but how do you choose from what seems like an endless variety? Here’s what you need to know.

**Toothbrush tips**
Look for a toothbrush with soft bristles and a size and shape that fit your mouth. You should be able to reach all areas easily. If you have arthritis or another condition that limits movement, an electric toothbrush may be helpful. Replace your toothbrush every three to four months or before the bristles become frayed.

**Which toothpaste is best?**
Fluoride is the most important ingredient in toothpaste. It helps fight plaque and cavities while the toothpaste and toothbrush clean and polish your teeth. Some toothpastes also have ingredients that help ease sensitivity, fight gingivitis, whiten teeth, and reduce tartar buildup.

**Rinse away**
Ask your dentist if using a fluoridated mouth rinse daily to help prevent cavities is right for you. If you have problems with plaque and gingivitis, use an ADA-Accepted antiplaque/gingivitis mouth rinse to help fight these problems. Most mouth rinses can also help reduce bad breath.

When choosing a brand for any oral health product, look for the ADA Seal of Acceptance, which indicates that the product has been deemed safe and effective.

Find a complete list of products carrying the ADA Seal of Acceptance at [www.riteaid.com/oralcare](http://www.riteaid.com/oralcare).
DO YOU SUFFER FROM DRY MOUTH?

Dry mouth can be more than just an irritation. It can lead to infection, tooth decay, bad breath, and other oral health problems.

What causes dry mouth?
Hundreds of medicines list dry mouth (or xerostomia) as a possible side effect, including those for depression and high blood pressure. Dry mouth can also be caused by dehydration and health problems such as Sjogren’s Syndrome. It’s also a side effect of radiation therapy for head and neck cancers.

How can you get relief?
Management of dry mouth will depend on the underlying cause; see your dentist or physician for ongoing dry mouth. These self-care measures may also help:
• Chew sugar-free gum or suck on sugar-free candy to help stimulate saliva flow and keep your mouth moist.
• Ask your dentist or Rite Aid pharmacist about over-the-counter saliva substitutes to help keep oral tissues moist and lubricated.
• Drink lots of water.
• Avoid alcohol, caffeine, and carbonated drinks. Also, choose an alcohol-free mouthwash.

Ask your dentist or Rite Aid pharmacist if dry mouth is a side effect from a medicine you’re taking. You can visit www.riteaid.com/oralcare for a list of medications that may cause or aggravate dry mouth.
CARING FOR CANKER AND COLD SORES

Is a sore on or inside your mouth irritating you? Knowing the basics about some common mouth sores may help ease your irritation.

Canker sores
Anyone who has mixed orange juice and canker sores knows how painful these small ulcers can be. Canker sores may appear on the tongue and other soft tissues inside the mouth. While they most often occur singly, sometimes multiple ulcers can be present. Although the cause of canker sores isn’t well understood, they’re not contagious and usually disappear within a week or two.

To ease the pain in the meantime, try over-the-counter medications, such as numbing or protective ointments, or an antimicrobial mouth rinse. And avoid hot, acidic, and spicy foods, which can irritate the sore. See your dentist if a sore lasts longer than two weeks.

Cold sores
Cold sores, also called fever blisters, are small, painful blisters that usually show up on the lips, but can also appear on the skin around the nose or chin.

Cold sores are caused by a virus and are very contagious. Once infected, the virus stays in the body. For some, the virus remains inactive, while in others it causes recurring cold sores.

Cold sores usually clear up on their own in about a week or two. Antiviral medications may be used for treatment or prevention, and over-the-counter topical anesthetics may provide temporary relief. See your dentist if symptoms last for more than two weeks.

Ask your Rite Aid pharmacist for help finding relief from mouth sores.
BE PREPARED FOR DENTAL EMERGENCIES

Knocking out or breaking a tooth or developing a toothache can be a scary experience. But knowing what to do ahead of time can help you take the right steps in a dental emergency.

Knocked out tooth: Place the tooth in a small container of cold milk and see a dentist immediately. Teeth that are replaced within an hour have the best prognosis. Don’t scrub the tooth — this can damage small connecting fibers on the tooth’s surface.

Broken tooth: Rinse your mouth with warm water and put a cold compress on the area to help with any facial swelling. Call your dentist right away. If you can find the missing piece of tooth, bring it to the dentist with you.

Toothache: It may be helpful to rinse your mouth with lukewarm water to clean the area. Gently floss to remove any food caught between the teeth. See your dentist.

Object caught between teeth: Gently remove the object with dental floss. Never use a sharp or pointed instrument. See your dentist if you aren’t able to dislodge it.

Injured lip or tongue: Gently cleanse the area with a clean cloth. Apply a cold compress to lessen swelling. If there is bleeding that doesn’t stop, go to the emergency room immediately.

Possible broken jaw: Control swelling with a cold compress and seek emergency help right away.
START GOOD DENTAL HABITS EARLY

Good oral hygiene during pregnancy is important for you and your baby. Studies show that cavity/gingivitis-causing bacteria can be passed from mother to child. Keep on the right track during pregnancy by thoroughly brushing your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and flossing daily.

Baby your baby’s teeth
Protect your new baby with these dental care tips:
• Wipe your baby’s gums with a clean cloth after meals. This removes plaque and protects erupting teeth.
• When teeth appear, switch to a soft-bristled toothbrush with water.
• Don’t put your little one to bed with a bottle of milk, juice, sweetened water, or sugar-laden drinks. These promote tooth decay.
• Schedule your child’s first dental visit when the first tooth erupts, but no later than age 1.

Tips for young kids
Introduce good habits with these steps:
• For kids younger than 2, don’t use fluoride-containing (or fluoridated) toothpaste, and teach them to spit, not swallow, the toothpaste. When kids can spit well and don’t swallow by mistake, start using a pea-sized dab of fluoride-containing (or fluoridated) toothpaste.
• Help kids brush twice daily. Most kids can’t brush well on their own until age 7.
• Make brushing fun. Try colorful toothpastes and toothbrushes with rotating heads. Set a colorful timer for two minutes so kids keep brushing.
• Feed kids healthy fruits and veggies instead of sugary cookies and candy.
Give Kids A Smile! — and a Brighter Future

The Give Kids A Smile!® program is a collaboration among the American Dental Association, dental professionals, and sponsors like Rite Aid. Its purpose is to bring free dental care to kids in need and to call attention to unmet oral health needs. This year, more than 325,000 children received much-needed oral care at no charge to them or their families at more than 2,000 sites around the country. That’s a lot of happy and healthy smiles.

No kids or parents should suffer needlessly. At Rite Aid, we believe kids should never lose their smiles because of an inability to pay. And no parents should have to watch their children go without necessary care. Or suffer from the guilt that goes with it. We’re here to help.

Just shop at Rite Aid for your oral care needs during August and September. In appreciation of your purchases, Rite Aid has made a $15,000 donation to keep this program running strong. You can learn more about Give Kids A Smile! at www.ada.org anytime.

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