



A healthy mouth is an important part of a healthy body.

Did you know....

- ▶ Having good dental health may lower your risk for heart disease and stroke.
- ▶ Brushing, flossing and seeing a dentist are important parts of Diabetes management.
- ▶ If you are undergoing cancer treatment, your dentist should be a part of your cancer care team.
- ▶ Hormonal changes that happen during menopause can have an effect on a woman's dental health.

Everyone knows that having a healthy mouth is important for eating, speaking and feeling good about your smile, but not everyone knows that having a healthy mouth may also reduce your risk for heart disease and stroke, and make diabetes easier to control. Hormonal changes that happen throughout a woman's lifetime can put us at greater risk for gingivitis, the earliest form of periodontal (around the tooth) disease. Gingivitis does not hurt, but it is harmful. When the infection gets to the point that the bone around your teeth is affected, it is called periodontitis. Periodontal disease can be treated, but just like with other chronic diseases, needs careful, ongoing treatment.

Many people are afraid of going to the dentist, especially if it has been a long time since last visit. Tell the dentist or dental hygienist how you feel; they can help you feel more relaxed. Tell your dentist and dental hygienist about any medical issues that you have. Your dentist is an important part of your health care team.

If you don't have a dentist, ask friends and family for help about which dentist to call. If you don't have dental insurance, here is a list of offices that may be able to help you pay based on how much you earn:

Island Pond Health and Dental Center

1-802-723-4300

Northern Counties Dental Center (Hardwick)

1-802-472-2260

The Community Dental Clinic in Lamoille

1-802-888-7585

The Ludlow Dental Center

1-802-228-4446

Red Logan Dental Clinic (White River)

1-802-295-7573

The Community Health Center of Burlington

1-802-652-1050

The Health Center (Plainfield)

1-802-454-1047

The Richford/Swanton Dental Clinic

1-802-255-5520

Community Health Center of the Rutland Region

1-802-774-5050





Tips for Taking Care of Your Mouth

Making Time

Taking away plaque (germs) from your teeth by brushing two times a day and flossing one time a day is the most important part of keeping your mouth healthy. But, adding new steps in the morning or at bedtime can be hard, especially if you're very busy. Here are some tips for adding brushing and flossing into your routine:

- If you are very tired at night, try brushing and flossing right after you finish dinner. This has the added benefit of making you less likely to snack after dinner!

- Multi task! Keep a tooth brush and floss in the shower
- Keeping floss in your purse, by the TV, in your car, or by your desk can provide visual reminders, and you may find yourself with a few minutes to spare during the day that you could spend flossing.

Healthy Choices

Consider your diet: Chewing sugarless gum after meals and snacks may help prevent tooth decay, especially if it has an artificial sweetener called Xylitol in it. Drinking water that has fluoride in it can strengthen teeth and protect against decay. Both of these things can also help you control your weight.



Dry Mouth

Many people suffer from dry mouth, also called Xerostomia. Dry mouth happens when you do not have enough saliva (spit). Saliva is important for keeping the mouth wet and clean, protecting teeth and for helping digestion. Over 400 medications cause dry mouth. Dry mouth also results from radiation treatment for head and neck cancers, stress, diabetes, and hormonal changes that happen during menopause. If dry mouth is not treated it can lead to oral yeast infections, a burning feeling, tooth

decay and bad breath. Dry mouth can also make it hard to swallow. If you have dry mouth, your dentist may recommend fake saliva. Sugar-free gum or candy can help you make more of your own saliva. Taking good care of your mouth is very important if you have dry mouth, be sure to talk to a dentist about it.

Smokers have more of the harmful bacteria that cause periodontal disease, and they are more likely to lose teeth because of it. If you are using mints or gum to help quit smoking, choose those without sugar.

FREE for Ladies First members:



every try counts

1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669) vtquitnetwork.org
VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH