

THE IMPORTANCE OF ORAL HYGIENE

- ♥ Oral hygiene is essential to a person's overall health status.
- ♥ Oral Care is not grooming, it is infection control! Oral Hygiene helps to maintain the healthy state of the mouth, teeth, gums, and lips. Brushing cleans the teeth of food particles, plaque, and bacteria. Flossing further helps remove plaque and tartar from between the teeth to reduce gum inflammation and infections. Complete oral hygiene enhances well-being, comfort, stimulates the appetite and improves overall health status.
- ♥ Poor oral hygiene can lead to tooth decay, periodontal diseases, bad breath, tooth loss, and oral cancers.



HOW TO IMPLEMENT GOOD ORAL HYGIENE

- ♥ Adequate and effective oral hygiene regimen includes tooth brushing 4 times a day (after meals and at bedtime). Flossing removes plaque and tartar between teeth. Flossing once a day is sufficient.
- ♥ Proper oral hygiene immediately following a meal further reduces plaque.
- ♥ A new toothbrush every 3 months or following a cold or strep throat to minimize growth or microorganisms on the brush surfaces.
- ♥ A proper diet, which excludes foods promoting plaque formation and tooth decay and promotes healthy periodontal structures can also promote oral health. Plaque-forming foods include carbonated beverages, breads and starches.
- ♥ If an individual has difficulties brushing their teeth a referral for PT, OT or a specialized visit to discuss the concerns with their dental provider might be warranted for recommendations on adaptive equipment or a plan of action to assist with implanting effective oral care.
- ♥ If an Individual has poor oral hygiene, a medicated toothpaste and mouth wash might be indicated along, with extra visits to the dentist.
- ♥ Proper denture fitting and care is equally important for those who are lacking teeth. Improper denture fitting can cause sores on the gums and problems with chewing.
- ♥ Encourage everyone of all ages to have a dental check-up at least every 6 months.



ASK YOUR CARE MANAGER FOR SUPPORTS & SERVICES AVAILABLE TO ADDRESS BEHAVIOR CONCERNS OF A LOVED ONE.