

HealthyBy Choice

...One Day at a Time

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National Dental Hygiene Month

Always brush two minutes, two times a day, every day —

Research shows that brushing for two minutes is the single most important method for reducing plaque and preventing cavities, gingivitis and other plaque-related diseases. Brushing for two minutes twice a day is crucial to maintaining healthy smiles. Proper brushing technique cleans teeth and gums effectively.

Ensure Flossing is a Daily Habit —

Daily flossing (or other methods of interdental cleaning) removes plaque and food particles that cannot be reached by a toothbrush, particularly under the gum line and between teeth. Failure to do so can allow for plaque buildup in these areas - which in turn can lead to tooth decay and gum disease.

Getting into the routine of daily flossing can be a challenge. Making flossing easier can improve compliance with recommendations for daily flossing. If you resist flossing, try to determine why and tell your dental hygienist. Knowing the precise reason you are not flossing will enable them to recommend floss with the right thickness, coating or filaments so you might be encouraged to floss more often.

Use mouthwash to improve oral health —

Rinsing your mouth with an anti-microbial mouth rinse each day is another important step you can take to prevent gum disease (gingivitis). Remember that the teeth themselves account for less than half of your mouth, so brushing and flossing alone cannot eliminate all plaque and germs. Be sure to finish your oral care routine with an antiseptic mouthwash that carries the ADA Seal of Acceptance. You also should talk with your dental hygienist to determine which mouth rinse is right for you.

Chewing sugar-free gum after eating can help fight tooth decay —

Chewing sugar-free gum after eating is clinically proven to be an important part of good oral health. The action of chewing sugar-free gum stimulates the most important natural defense against tooth decay — saliva — which in turn helps fight cavities, neutralizes plaque acids, remineralizes enamel to strengthen teeth and washes away food particles. Scientific evidence clearly shows that chewing sugar-free gum, especially after eating and drinking, has a positive impact on oral health. Help your body naturally fight against tooth decay by chewing sugar-free gum after meals.



Better Teeth...Better Health!



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September is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Tips for Prevention:

1. **Avoid becoming overweight.** Obesity raises the risk of breast cancer after menopause, the time of life when breast cancer most often occurs. Avoid gaining weight over time, and try to maintain a body-mass index under 25.
2. **Eat healthy to avoid tipping the scale.** Embrace a diet high in vegetables and fruit and low in sugared drinks, refined carbohydrates and fatty foods. Eat lean protein such as fish or chicken breast and eat red meat in moderation, if at all. Eat whole grains. Choose vegetable oils over animal fats.
3. **Keep physically active.** Research suggests that increased physical activity, even when begun later in life, reduces overall breast-cancer risk by about 10 percent to 30 percent. All it takes is moderate exercise like a 30-minute walk five days a week to get this protective effect.
4. **Drink little or no alcohol.** Alcohol use is associated with an increased risk of breast cancer. Women should limit intake to no more than one drink per day, regardless of the type of alcohol.
5. **Don't smoke.** Research suggests that long-term smoking is associated with increased risk of breast cancer in some women.
6. **If you bear children, breast-feed your babies for as long as possible. Women who breast-feed their babies for at least a year in total** have a reduced risk of developing breast cancer later.
7. **Avoid hormone replacement therapy.** Menopausal hormone therapy increases risk for breast cancer. If you must take hormones to manage menopausal symptoms, avoid those that contain progesterone and limit their use to less than three years. "Bioidentical hormones" and hormonal creams and gels are no safer than prescription hormones and should also be avoided.
8. **Get regular breast cancer screenings.** Follow your doctor or health care provider's recommendations to decide what type of screening you need and how often you need it.



If you are at high risk for breast cancer, such as having a particular gene like a BRCA gene, or have a strong family history or have had high-risk benign breast disease in the past, talk with your doctor about other options for you which might include:

- A. **Extra screenings.** For some women, MRI or ultrasound screenings can add valuable information to regular mammogram screening.
- B. **Estrogen-blocking drugs.** Women with a family history of breast cancer or who are over age 60 should talk to their doctor about the pros and cons of estrogen-blocking drugs such as tamoxifen, raloxifene, and aromatase inhibitors.
- C. **Prophylactic surgery to remove breasts and/or ovaries.** Women who have had both breasts surgically removed reduce their risk of breast cancer by over 90 percent. Women who have had both ovaries removed have about half the risk of developing breast cancer as women with intact ovaries. Clearly these options are most appropriate for women at very high risk.



Knowledge...Prevention...Early Detection!

