

Quick Tips for Better Oral Health



No dentist? No dental insurance?

For help finding
dental services, call:

King County 2-1-1 (all ages)
Dial 2-1-1 or
1-800-621-4636

Senior Information & Assistance
(age 60+)
Call 1-888-4-ELDERS
(1-888-435-3377)

Or visit
www.seniorsoralhealth.org

Fast Facts

- Poor dental health impacts overall health and increases the risk for diabetes and heart disease.
- About 75% of people age 60+ have only some of their natural teeth.
- Nearly 23% of adults ages 65–74 have severe gum disease.
- Dry mouth (reduction in saliva production), often caused by prescription and over-the-counter medications, is a problem for 30% of older adults. It contributes to significant tooth decay and gum disease. There are over 400 medications that can cause dry mouth.

What You Can Do

- Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
- Use floss to clean between teeth.
- Get regular dental checkups, even if you have dentures.
- Limit intake of starchy snacks and candy, cough drops, and drinks that contain sugar. When you do snack, brush your teeth afterward. Even rinsing your mouth with water after snacks can reduce the risk of decay.
- Manage dry mouth in healthy ways. Drink extra water or use sugar-free gum, candy, or mints to moisten your mouth. Saliva substitutes and oral moisturizers can also be helpful. Talk to your pharmacist or dentist about other ideas.
- If you have diabetes, pay extra attention to your oral health.
- Check your mouth regularly for sores. Report any unusual lumps, bumps, or sores that don't go away within two weeks to your doctor or dentist.
- Don't use tobacco.
- Drink fluoridated water.



www.agingkingcounty.org



Community Advocates for Oral Health

www.seniorsoralhealth.org