

Oral Health Self-Management Plan

EVERY DAY:

- Limit sweet/starchy snacks and sugary drinks between meals.
- Brush twice daily with fluoride toothpaste.
- Floss daily.
- Drink fluoridated water.

REGULARLY:

- Regular dental visits (determine schedule with your dentist)
- Discuss oral health at your annual medical exam, especially if you have oral pain, dry mouth, or are taking multiple medications.

Green Flags – All Clear



If you have:

- No oral health problems or pain
- Your own natural teeth are intact or your dentures fit correctly
- No problems eating a variety of foods

What this means ...

- You do not have “dry mouth” OR mouth dryness is managed with extra water, sugar-free gum, or sugar-free hard candy.
- You are not having any oral health issues at this time.

Keep up the good work!

Yellow Flags – Caution



If you have:

- Persistent dry mouth, which can cause difficulty speaking or talking; absence or lack of pooling of saliva in mouth.
- Problems with chewing or cheek biting
- An unexplained change in your mouth or throat, such as sores, swelling, or numbness, or if you have difficulty eating or swallowing that doesn't resolve within a few days
- Frequent bleeding gums
- Poor fitting dentures

What this means ...

- You may have “dry mouth,” which puts you at higher risk for dental cavities and gum disease (gums may appear red, swollen, and bleeding, and may be pulled away from the teeth).
- You may need a denture adjustment.
- You may need a dental check-up to prevent problems from developing and treating any problems before they become painful.

Improved home care (brushing and flossing) is advised.

Call your doctor, consulting nurse, or health care provider if symptoms do not improve.

Name:

Number:

Instructions:

If you notice a Yellow Flag, work closely with your health care team.

Red Flags – Stop and Think



If you have:

- An area of persistent redness or soreness in your mouth
- Persistent bleeding gums
- Loose teeth
- Any lesion in your mouth (including lips, cheeks, tongue, and roof of the mouth)
- Discomfort that causes you to not wear your dentures at all or limits your ability to eat healthy solid foods

What this means ...

You need to be evaluated by a health care professional immediately.

If possible, notify your health care provider's office.

Name:

Number:

Follow these instructions: CALL 9-1-1

If you notice a Red Flag, CALL 911. Emergency!

Oral Health is Important!

No dentist? No dental insurance?

The following resources can help you find dental services:

King County 2-1-1 (all ages)

Dial 2-1-1 or call 1-800-621-4636

Community Living Connections (age 60+ or 18+ with a disability)

1-844-348-KING

(1-844-348-5464)

For more information, visit

www.seniorsoralhealth.org

Aging and Disability Services

Aging and Disability Services (ADS)—the Area Agency on Aging for King County— plans, coordinates, and advocates for comprehensive services for older adults, family caregivers, and people with disabilities throughout Seattle and King County.

For more information, call 1-844-348-5464 or e-mail info@communitylivingconnections.org



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