

**BE PROUD
OF YOUR MOUTH**



SADA
THE SOUTH AFRICAN
DENTAL ASSOCIATION



**World Oral
Health Day**
20 March

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FDI World Dental Federation

Eat a balanced, low sugar diet

FACT

Oating excessive amounts of sugar from snacks, processed foods, and drinks not only causes tooth decay (dental caries), but is a major contributor to obesity and increases the risk of diabetes.

- Eat a well-balanced diet that is low in sugar and high in fruit and vegetables.
- Adults should have no more than six teaspoons of sugar daily; for children it's three.
- Beware of sugars added to foods and drinks by manufacturers.
- Pay close attention to how much sugar you are adding when preparing your own meals.
- Avoid 'empty calories'. Sugary drinks, such as soda, juice, energy, and sports drinks, are a main source of empty calories, which contain high levels of energy and no nutritional value.
- Do not eat sugary snacks and treats in-between meals. Having sugar throughout the day increases the risk of developing tooth decay.
- Favour water as your main drink. Consuming sugary drinks regularly (almost one can a day) , is not only bad for your mouth, it increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

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Look after your oral health for your happiness and well-being

FACT

Oral health is multi-faceted and can impact every aspect of life; that's because the health of your mouth is connected to your emotional, social, mental and overall physical well-being.

- **Oral health for emotional well-being** - When you have healthy self-esteem, you feel good about yourself. However, poor oral health can negatively impact personal value and self-image, which is harmful to emotional well-being, whereas good oral health can help us keep a positive state of mind.
- **Oral health for mental well-being** - Mental health includes our emotional, social and psychological well-being. Oral diseases have far-reaching consequences from missing work and school, to your self-confidence and how you socialize, or even your ability to enjoy a simple meal. Protect yourself and your quality of life.
- **Oral health for social well-being** - We build our social well-being by interacting with people around us. Oral diseases can impact personal relationships and make us more resistant to social interactions. Good oral health offers the ability to laugh, eat and communicate with others without worry or anxiety.
- **Oral health for physical well-being** - Good oral health is vital for general health and well-being and can be maintained by being aware of your risk factors and taking action to prevent disease. A healthy mouth can also lead to better sporting performance and help prevent sports injuries.

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Learn good oral health habits

Did you know?

It is really important to look after your teeth and mouth because germs can cause toothache, tooth decay (dental caries) and holes in your teeth.

- Use a fluoride toothpaste and a soft-bristled toothbrush.
- Gently move the brush in tiny circles for two minutes.
- Remember to brush all sides of your teeth: the outside, the inside, and the chewing surfaces.
- Spit out the toothpaste but don't rinse with water straight after brushing. This can wash the fluoride away, which helps to protect your teeth.
- Never snack after brushing your teeth at night. Going to bed with a clean mouth is very important.
- Visit the dentist regularly.
- Eat healthy foods and drinks.
- A healthy mouth helps protect your body too.

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Protect your mouth while you on the go

FACT

Chewing sugar-free gum is proven to benefit dental health as it helps neutralize plaque acids.

It is important to brush your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste. But your teeth come under attack from bacteria and plaque more than twice a day. Help protect your mouth while you're on the go and after meals and snacks by doing the following:

- **Rinse with a fluoride mouthwash** - A fluoride mouthwash not only freshens breath, it can help prevent tooth decay (dental caries).
- **Use floss or interdental brushes** - Regular cleaning helps to dislodge food and may reduce gum disease and bad breath by removing plaque that forms along the gum line.
- **Chew sugar-free gum** - Chewing sugar-free gum increases the amount of saliva you produce, which helps wash away food particles before they become trapped on, around or in between your teeth.

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Practice a good oral hygiene routine

FACT

Oral diseases, such as tooth decay (dental caries) and gum disease, can impact every aspect of life, from relationships and self-confidence through to school, work, and the ability to interact with others. Yet they are preventable.

Here's how you can keep your mouth healthy throughout life:

- Brush for two minutes, twice a day. Toothbrushing helps remove food and plaque, which if not managed can lead to tooth decay and gum disease.
- Brush every surface. Use a manual or electric toothbrush to brush the inside surfaces, outside surfaces and chewing surfaces of your teeth.
- Use a fluoride toothpaste. Fluoride plays a key role in the fight against tooth decay.
- Do not rinse with water straight after brushing. Spit out any excess toothpaste instead.
- Replace your toothbrush every three months. Brushing with an old, frayed toothbrush will not clean your teeth and mouth properly.
- Floss at least once a day. Regular cleaning helps to dislodge food and may reduce gum disease and bad breath by removing plaque that forms along the gum line.
- Protect your mouth while you're on the go. When brushing is not possible, rinse with a fluoride mouthwash or chew sugar-free gum after meals and snacks.

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Look after oral health for overall health

FACT

Just like other major diseases, prevention, early detection, and treatment of oral diseases is important to stop any negative effects on the rest of your body.

Oral health is vital for your general health and well-being.

- **EDENTUALISM** - Tooth loss should not be accepted as a natural course of ageing. Loss of teeth makes chewing more difficult and can lead to poor nutrition.
- **ORAL CANCER** - Reduce your risk of oral cancer by avoiding tobacco and limiting alcohol use.
- **CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE** - Good oral health could help in the prevention of heart disease and stroke.
- **DIABETES** - Maintaining a healthy mouth has a positive impact on the management of diabetes.
- **RESPIRATORY DISEASE** - Dental infections have been associated with a higher risk of pneumonia.
- **DEMENTIA** - The pathogens related to gum infection have been linked to the development of Alzheimer's Disease.

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Take charge of your oral health

FACT

Tooth decay (dental caries) is the most common health condition in the world, caused by unhealthy diets high in sugar as well as exposure to other risk factors.

- **Eat a balanced, low-sugar diet** - Adults should have no more than six teaspoons of sugar daily; for children it's three. Eating a varied, wholesome diet, which includes fruits and vegetables, will help maintain a healthy mouth and body.
- **Limit alcohol use** - Harmful use of alcohol is strongly linked with an increased risk of several cancers. Furthermore, the acid and high sugar content of most alcoholic drinks can erode your teeth, leading to tooth decay.
- **Avoid tobacco** - Tobacco in any form, smoking or smokeless, is unsafe. Tobacco use puts your mouth at an increased risk of gum disease and oral cancer. It also causes teeth staining, bad breath, premature tooth loss, and loss of taste and smell.
- **Practice good oral hygiene** - Brushing your teeth twice daily with a fluoride toothpaste stops plaque building up. A good oral hygiene routine, combined with regular visits to the dentist, is key to helping prevent oral conditions.

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Visit the dentist regularly

FACT

Oral diseases affect nearly 3.5 billion people, often leading to pain, discomfort, social isolation, loss of self-confidence, lost hours at work or school, and are linked to other serious health issues.

The dentist can help keep your teeth and mouth healthy. A regular check-up allows your dentist to see if you have any dental problems, provide a treatment plan if necessary and remove any build-up of plaque, which if not managed can lead to tooth decay (dental caries) or gum disease (periodontitis).

THE DENTIST WILL:

- examine your teeth, gums and mouth;
- advise how to maintain good oral health through eating a balanced, low-sugar diet, avoiding tobacco and limiting alcohol;
- educate you on how to keep your teeth and mouth healthy through good oral hygiene habits, including how to brush your teeth and floss correctly;
- provide any necessary treatment;
- discuss a date for your next visit;
- work with you to help maintain your oral and general health.

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