

Handout Title	Adult/ Caregiver
1. Fluoride	✓
2. Brushing and Flossing	✓
3. Stained and Discolored Teeth	✓
4. Spots on Teeth	✓
5. Nutritious Snacks	✓
6. Dental Home	✓
7. Tooth Decay	✓
8. Bad Breath	✓
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19. Mouth Guards	
20. Tobacco Use	✓
21. Oral Cancer	✓
22. Oral Piercing	✓

HELP ME  
smile

Oral Health Risk Assessment Protocols,  
Training Modules and Educational Materials  
for Use with Families of Young Children.



Adult/Caregiver

# FLUORIDE

- Makes teeth stronger and protects them from tooth decay.
- Is found naturally in water and some foods.
- Is added to many community water systems (tap water) when there isn't enough natural fluoride.
- Is also available through drops, tablets, gels, toothpastes, mouth rinses, and varnishes.
- Ask your doctor or dentist which type of fluoride is right for you and your family.



# BRUSHING AND FLOSSING TEETH

- Brush teeth two times a day to remove plaque.
- Brush for two-three minutes reaching all teeth.
- Brushing should be supervised by an adult until the child is 6-8 years old.
- Floss once a day – starting at age 8 with adult assistance.
- Replace toothbrush when bristles are frayed.
- Wipe the gums of infants with a wet cloth after each feeding.



# STAINED AND DISCOLORED TEETH

Teeth can be discolored or stained on the surface and/or discolored from the inside of the tooth. The stain or discoloration may be all over the tooth or appear as spots or lines in the enamel.

Causes:

- Trauma to the tooth
- High fever when tooth is forming
- Excessive fluoride
- Taking tetracycline before 8 years of age
- Not brushing teeth and gums
- Tooth decay
- Drinking cola, coffee or tea
- Old silver fillings
- Tobacco products



# SPOTS ON TEETH

## WHAT DOES TOOTH DECAY LOOK LIKE?

- **White spots** on teeth are the first sign of tooth decay. They look chalky and white and are found near the gums where plaque forms. These spots can be reversed if they are brushed and kept clean. Early cavities are not the only white spots that can be found. A dentist can tell the difference between early decay and white spots that are not health problems such as those that are from too much fluoride.
- If the teeth are not brushed and taken care of then the **white spots** will turn in to **brown spots** on the teeth. This is more advanced tooth decay. Any brown spot is not normal and should be checked by a dentist. Just because the brown spot doesn't hurt, doesn't mean it's not a cavity.



## NUTRITIOUS SNACKS

Meal and snack choices can play a big part in the health of your teeth.

Between meals, help control plaque, bacteria and acids by:

- Eating healthy, low-sugar snacks
- Limiting how often snacks are eaten
- Avoiding sweets that stick to the teeth



# DENTAL HOME

A dental home is an office or clinic where you and your family feel

welcome and have formed a relationship with the dentist and feel

comfortable receiving dental care on a regular basis.

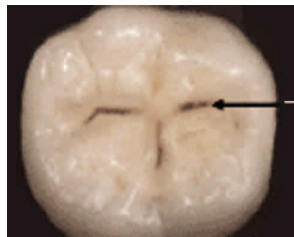
The staff at your dental home . . .

- Checks your teeth
- Keeps teeth healthy and attractive
- Gives advice on oral health issues
- Provides current information on the condition of your family's gums, teeth, and bite



# TOOTH DECAY OR CAVITIES

- The most common type of cavity starts in the grooves of the back teeth which cannot be completely cleaned by brushing, but where food usually sticks. Cavities also start on smooth surfaces that can easily be brushed and flossed.
- When it comes to cavities, how often sugary foods are eaten is more important than the amount eaten. Changing the diet to decrease how often sugar is eaten is very important.
- Plaque + food + teeth = cavity or decay.



# BAD BREATH

Bad breath can be caused by:

- Poor oral hygiene
- Food debris
- Certain foods like garlic and onion
- Dry mouth
- Tobacco products
- Medical disorders
- Gum disease

If you don't brush and floss every day then food collects between the teeth, on the tongue and around the gums causing bad breath. So brush your tongue when you brush your teeth.

See your dentist if bad breath does not go away



# BLEEDING GUMS

Gums that bleed can be a sign of gingivitis which is an infection and swelling of the gums. Symptoms include:

Red, soft or swollen gums, bad breath and bad taste in the mouth caused from not brushing and flossing the teeth every day.

Pregnant women and untreated diabetics are more likely to get gingivitis.

Gums that bleed can also be a sign of periodontal disease. Periodontal disease causes infected gums to pull away from the teeth because of damaged bone around the teeth. Left untreated your teeth may become loose and fall out.

**Brushing and flossing are the best ways to prevent gingivitis and periodontal disease.**

Bleeding can also be caused by injury to gums from sharp objects like a tooth pick if not used carefully.



# NUTRITION DURING PREGNANCY

- Eating a balanced diet with plenty of folic acid, protein, calcium and vitamins will contribute to your oral health and that of baby's.
- The mother will not lose a tooth for every child. The baby's calcium needs are provided by the mother's diet, not their teeth.
- When a mother's diet does not have enough calcium, her body may try to draw calcium from her bones to make up for it.
- In addition to milk, calcium can also be found in dark green leafy vegetables, soybeans, and dairy products.
- Snack wisely, not with sweet or sticky foods.



## CHANGES IN MOUTH AND GUMS DURING PREGNANCY

Hormone changes during pregnancy can cause gum disease, resulting in:

- Tender, swollen or red gums
- Gums that bleed when you brush or floss
- Bad breath or a bad taste in your mouth that won't go away

If you already have sign of gum disease, your pregnancy could make it worse.

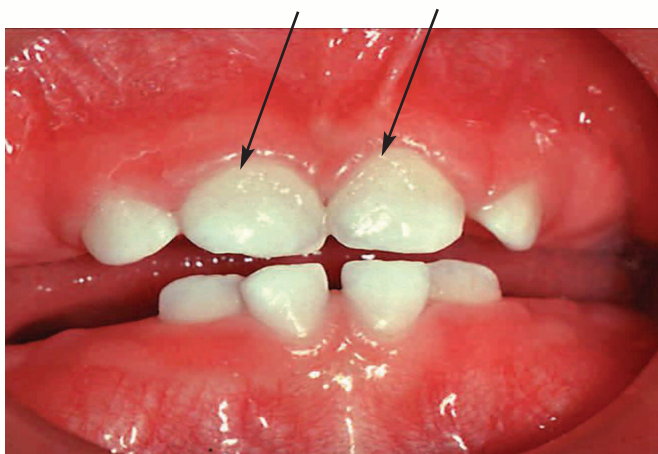
You may also develop a swelling on the outside of the gums called a “pregnancy tumor”. These are rare and usually appear in an area where you have gingivitis. It's generally painless and harmless and usually disappears after delivery.

If these occur, see your dentist.



## PLAQUE

- Cavity-causing bacteria live in plaque.
- Plaque is a soft, yellow-white, sticky material found on teeth and gums.
- Plaque irritates the gums and causes tooth decay.
- Daily brushing and flossing removes the plaque and helps keep teeth and gums healthy.
- If plaque is not removed from the teeth daily, the gums become red, soft and swollen and bleed easily during tooth brushing.



## Tobacco Causes:

- Bad breath
- Stained, yellow teeth
- Build up of tartar
- Mouth sores
- Facial wrinkling and appearance of aging
- Precancerous white patches or plaques
- Cancer of the throat, voice box and esophagus (leading to stomach)
- Delayed healing after oral surgery and tooth extractions



## Signs and Symptoms of Oral Cancer

- A persistent sore that does not heal (after 2 weeks).
- Color changes such as red or white patches in the mouth or on the lips.
- Pain, tenderness or numbness anywhere in the mouth or lips.
- A lump, thickening, rough spot, crust or small worn area.
- Difficulty in chewing, swallowing, speaking or hoarseness that does not go away and moving the jaw or tongue.
- Change in the way your teeth fit together.
- Repeated bleeding from the mouth or throat.
- Swelling, lump or growth anywhere in or about the mouth or neck.



# Complications of Oral Piercing and Wearing Oral Jewelry

You may:

- Develop excessive saliva and drooling.
- Have difficulties saying words clearly.
- Have problems with chewing and swallowing food.
- Have allergic reactions to the metal in the jewelry.
- Have loss of sensation in the tongue.
- Develop gum disease.
- Develop an infection of the skin or oral tissues.
- Chip or break teeth on jewelry.
- Have prolonged bleeding, swelling and nerve damage.
- Experience tooth loss.
- Contract hepatitis B, C, D and G.
- Choke or swallow jewelry that comes loose in your mouth.
- Be at risk of inflammation of the heart.

