

Caring for Your Teeth During COVID-19

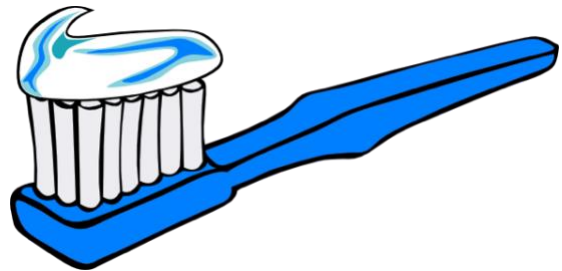
Oral health is directly linked to your overall health. Bacteria thrive in the mouth as it is a perfect environment for them to grow and can cause tooth decay and periodontal disease. Bacteria can enter the bloodstream and contribute to health problems in other parts of the body.

Dental offices across the U.S. have been closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, cancelling regular dental cleanings and check-ups. Until your next dental appointment, it is especially important to maintain an at-home oral hygiene regimen to prevent oral health problems.

Tools of the Trade

Toothbrush

Use a toothbrush with soft bristles.
Replace toothbrush or electric toothbrush head every *3 months*.
Do not share toothbrushes and other mouth care tools.



Toothpaste

Avoid toothpastes with harmful chemicals, namely *sodium lauryl sulfate (SLS)* and artificial colors and sweeteners.

Floss

Use floss to remove bacteria below the gum line and sides of *all* teeth – do not neglect teeth and gums at the back of mouth.
To promote gum health, you can also try a gum massaging tool to increase blood flow to gum tissue.



Tips for Teeth, Tongue and Gums



Consistency is key. Brush teeth first thing in the morning and before you go to bed at night.

Brush your tongue – it houses most of the harmful bacteria in your mouth.



Rinse with a warm saltwater mixture to reduce mouth bacteria, soothe gums and reduce tooth sensitivity.

Avoid hard, sticky foods. It is important to be careful with your teeth when seeing the dentist is not an option.



When should I call my dentist?

Dental offices are reopening and eager to welcome you back for preventive, restorative and emergency oral health care.

Many dentists are still available over the phone or have adopted telehealth practices to virtually communicate with patients. Your dentist can assess your problem and determine if you need to visit the office.



Sources:

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