

Dental & Oral health, a must for the healthy life



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Dental & Oral diseases may begin as a mild disease but can be tremendously distressing & painful with sleepless night. They could also act as initial nidus of systemic diseases with long term consequences. Dental Caries a very common condition, especially starting in young age can adversely affect the growth & development of the children. Extraction of teeth at younger age can take away the quality of gustatory life. All the diseases of teeth & oral cavity can be prevented. Following are the important tips.

1. Teeth Care:

Regular brushing, **atleast twice** a day in the morning & at bed time. Ideally brushing should be done **after every meal**. After every meal, one may do brushing for dental cleaning, without paste. Tooth brush should be soft & not hard. Technique should be such that brushing addresses to all surfaces & aspects of teeth in a systematic manner.

Tooth paste, use any paste desirably containing substances like common salt, calcium, **fluoride**, turmeric & other healthy established herbal gradients. One should take **only small quantity** of tooth paste just sufficient to cover only the one third of the brush surface.

2. Interdental Care:

Food particles may get entangled in between teeth, this happens more with increasing age. These deposits in between teeth may produce bad smell in the mouth, caries & other diseases. Tooth brushing alone may not get rid of interdental deposits. Therefore, one must give special attention to interdental space & clean all the interdental spaces with the help of **interdental brushes** of appropriate size or **floss**. One should be careful while flossing, the gum should not get traumatized.

3. Gum care:

The gum should be massaged every time while doing oral care. The most convenient method would be massing gums with finger from one end of gums to other end of both upper & lower gums. To make it practically more effective, one can do **finger massage with substances like common salt & oil** or tooth powders having substances which shrink or tighten gums like **bark of walnut** etc. This will definitely enhance gum health & prevent diseases like pyorrhoea.

4. Tongue Care:

Covering layer of tongue undergoes frequent desquamation, which along with food residue generate coating on the tongue with resultant poor hygiene & bad smell. Therefore, regularly one should clean tongue with **tongue cleaner** for better tongue hygiene & health.

5. Throat care:

Frequently food article residues are left in throat, especially in children with **bottle feed or milk intake at night**, thus allowing bacterial growth in the throat. This causes common problem of adenoids & tonsillar enlargement in children with resultant frequent sore throats with growth retardation. Adults develop problems of snoring, disturbed sleep & recurrent sore throat. The appropriate preventive strategy is to do **mouth gargle every time after meals with lukewarm saline water** for the most optimal outcome. However, one could use alternately, **gentle antiseptic mouth washes** like Listerine etc. One should take atleast few sips of water every time after eating, if proper gargle is not possible.

6. Cheek care:

If one takes excessive spices, chews tobacco or have poor dental alignment & others, may develop diseases of cheeks including thickening & colour change of cheek mucosa & Cancer later. Therefore, it is must that one should stop chewing tobacco, avoid using excessive chilies & alcohol & should have **periodic evaluation/** check up by a doctor for early diagnosis & treatment, should any pathology develop.

7. Lip care:

Lip & angles of mouth frequently get cracked especially with exposure to **cold, lack of sleep & stress, nutrition specially vitamins & minerals**. Cracks could be painful & annoying. The best preventive strategy is to avoid exposure to cold by **applying some oily substance may be ghee, oil, cream or moisturizer**, along with ensuring adequate sleep & rest & good nutrition.

8. Nutrients & oral & dental health;

Regular consumption of nutrients containing **Protein, Calcium, Vitamin A, B, C & D, Iron, Zinc & other micro-mineral** play a positive preventive & therapeutic role for oral health. **Chewing Cardamom&Fennel (saunf)** is a very useful practice for cleaning of teeth of food items after meals. One could use **Chewing gum** for the same. Stop tobacco chewing, smoking, alcohol consumption, minimize consumption of spices & ensuring proper closure of dentures will go a long way to prevent oral mucosal diseases including cancer. Correct & appropriate eating practices in the evening & at night, preventing food eructation & acid reflux will avoid bad oral smell & prevent undesired teeth changes. Minimise intake of sweet food, chocolates, icecream& ensure adequate appropriate luke warm saline or atleast plain water gargle after consuming them. Hence, a child is not denied the pleasure of his favorite food item & gargle has minimized the possible harm.

Conclusion

Practice good oral hygiene by always **brushing your teeth twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste, cleaning between your teeth with floss** or another interdental cleaner, **replacing your toothbrush every three or four months** and by **eating a balanced diet and limiting between meal snacks**. Don't forget to schedule **regular dental check-ups**. Ensure best positive oral & dental health by practicing the above stated tips & enjoy the best gustatory life & systemic health. Oral Care does not mean tooth brushing alone, but includes interdental care, tongue cleaning, throat, cheek & lip care. **Train your child about comprehensive oral care**, so as to optimize his growth potential & keep him free from most of the systemic disease. **It is never too late to start Comprehensive Oral care, start today & secure your healthier future.**