

Healthy Ageing



Be wise about your oral health
Good oral health is essential for your overall wellbeing and a healthy mouth will improve your quality of life.



It has never been more important to take care of your teeth and gums, because of links between gum disease, diabetes, cancer and heart disease.



Small diet and lifestyle changes can make a big difference to your oral and general health. Eat more fruit and vegetables and take regular exercise.



DHF
Dental Health
Foundation
Ireland

Visit your dental team once a year, even if you have no teeth of your own, for advice and a check-up to help prevent tooth wear, tooth decay, gum disease, bad breath and for a mouth cancer examination.

Tooth Tips

- Brush twice daily for 2-3 minutes before bedtime and one other time. Use a soft/medium toothbrush using a fluoride toothpaste (1450 ppm) to keep teeth strong and help prevent tooth decay. Change your brush when the bristles are worn or every 3 months. Gently brush your tongue to remove bacteria. Spit, don't rinse after brushing.
- Floss daily to reduce plaque build-up or use interdental brushes. Ask your dental team for advice on technique.
- Clean dentures/plate daily and use a soft toothbrush to clean your tongue and roof of your mouth. Remove dentures before sleeping to give the gums a chance to rest.

Things to Consider

- Choose sugar free medicines when available, ask the dentist, doctor or pharmacist. Saliva substitutes, sipping iced water and chewing sugar-free gum can help relieve dry mouth. Avoid sucking sweets.
- Smoking and alcohol are risk factors for mouth cancer and gum disease.
- Regular exercise may help relieve stress which is a risk factor for gum disease and may also cause tooth wear.

Diet Tips

- Choose healthy snacks between meals like low-fat dairy, limit sugary snacks to mealtimes. Dried fruits and honey are high in sugars that cause tooth decay.
- Keep hydrated, water and low-fat milk are the best drinks, sugary/fizzy drinks may cause tooth decay. Limit fruit juice or smoothies to one small glass daily, with a meal and choose unsweetened.
- Read food labels for sugar content (less than 5g per 100g is low sugar).