

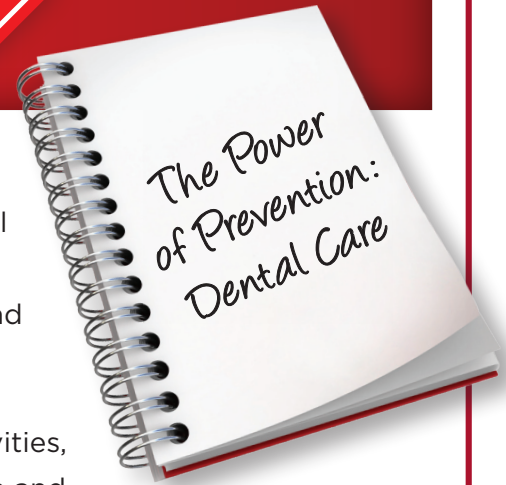
Prevention 101SM

Knowing What You Need and When to Get It

Taking time for good dental care is very important to your overall health and well-being. Research has suggested a link between oral health and heart disease, stroke, pre-term births, diabetes and respiratory disease. Dental disease is preventable!

Regular brushing and flossing helps prevent tooth decay and cavities, gum (periodontal) disease, bad breath and keeps the teeth white and free from stains, reducing the need for fillings and other costly procedures. Periodontal disease is the leading cause of tooth loss. Good daily oral care makes the trip to the dentist easy and pain-free. With proper dental hygiene, your teeth will last a lifetime.

Regular dental visits—every six months or as scheduled by your dentist—will help you learn more about proper care for your teeth and gums. A visit to the dentist could detect more than just a cavity. Often, the first sign of a medical condition will appear in the mouth. Your dental professional will examine your teeth and gums for signs of tooth decay, gum disease and other health problems. Gingivitis (the early stage of periodontal disease) and other abnormal conditions in the mouth are often painless, so you won't detect them on your own.



Teeth •
Upper and lower jaws •
Gums and the tissues in the •
linings of the mouth and throat

ORAL HEALTH INCLUDES:

- Tongue
- Lips and salivary glands
- Chewing muscles
- Roof of the mouth



STOP



CALL



SCHEDULE



What You Need

Prevention and early detection are the solutions to proper dental care and protecting your oral health. Follow the **At-A-Glance** guide below for an overview of the special considerations for dental care based on age and other factors.

Current recommendations suggest that **ADULTS and CHILDREN should see their dentists EVERY SIX MONTHS for a dental exam and cleaning.** Many dental problems are easy to treat when caught early. This helps to prevent further damage to your oral and overall health.

AT-A-GLANCE RECOMMENDED EXAMS AND SCREENINGS FOR BONE HEALTH

INFANTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Teeth can appear any time, typically around the sixth month, but possibly as late as the thirteenth month.Preventive dentistry for your child should begin when their first tooth begins to make an appearance or at least by their first birthday. The earlier your child begins getting professional dental care and the earlier they develop proper good oral hygiene habits, the better their dental health will be as they get older.
TODDLERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">During the toddler stage, it's important you continue to supervise your toddler's dental care. Your child's first set of teeth will last until his or her fifth or sixth birthday, so it's important to keep these teeth healthy.Be sure your toddler brushes twice a day.Floss your toddler's teeth once a day to clean in between teeth where the toothbrush can't reach.
YOUNG CHILDREN	<ul style="list-style-type: none">By age six or seven, most children begin to lose their baby teeth and permanent teeth start to take their place.Make sure your child visits the dentist regularly (two times per year), and check with your dentist to make sure your child is receiving the proper amount of fluoride to help prevent tooth decay.Be sure to discuss dental sealants for your child. Sealants are best applied when the first permanent molars erupt, around age six, or when the second permanent molars erupt, around age 12.
PRE-TEENS/ TEENAGERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">By 13, many teenagers will have 28 permanent teeth.For an image-conscious teen, the idea of teeth stains, missing teeth and bad breath are ample reason to keep up with their oral care regimen.
LATE TEENS/ EARLY 20S	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wisdom teeth—the last four of the 32 total permanent teeth—usually erupt during the late teens/early 20s.If wisdom teeth are impacted and/or not properly or fully erupted from the bone or gumline, they will require extraction.
ADULTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Although many oral health problems become more prevalent with age, most are preventable.PREGNANCY and the changes pregnant women go through may put them at higher risk for dental problems. Just as dental health is connected to your overall health, dental care is important to the health of the fetus. It's extremely important for Mom to take care of her teeth during pregnancy, as certain dental problems can increase the risk of complications.Just because you have DENTURES doesn't mean you shouldn't visit the dentist at least once per year. Periodontal disease and oral cancer can affect anyone, including denture-wearers. Also, periodic visits will allow the dentist to assess the fit of your dentures, as your gums and oral tissue can shrink over time. Loose or ill-fitting dentures can cause discomfort, sores and infections.

What to Track



Create a **Personal Health Record** for yourself and each member of your family to see all your health care information at a glance in one convenient location. A Personal Health Record table is provided below for your convenience.

PERSONAL HEALTH RECORD			
SCREENING	DATE	RESULTS	NOTES
GENERAL HEALTH			
Physical Exam			
HEART HEALTH			
Weight			
BMI			
Waist Circumference			
Blood Pressure			
Total Cholesterol			
HDL-Cholesterol			
LDL-Cholesterol			
REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH			
Pelvic Exam			
Mammogram			
Pap Test			
HIV/Sexual Transmitted Diseases Screening			
Prostate Screening			
COLORECTAL HEALTH			
Colorectal Cancer Screening			
DIABETES SCREENING			
Blood Glucose (Sugar)			
BONE HEALTH			
Bone Mineral Density			
ORAL HEALTH			
Dental Exam			
VISION CARE			
Eye Exam			



What Other Steps to Take



Regular dental check-ups and good oral hygiene are keys to maintaining oral health. Diet and other lifestyle habits also play a role in your oral health. Remember...dental disease is almost entirely preventable! Take action to keep your teeth for a lifetime. If you have dental care coverage, be sure to take advantage of your dental benefits for a healthy smile and a healthy you.

Remember the basics of good dental care:

1. Brush twice a day.
2. Floss once a day.
3. Rinse with mouthwash.
4. Replace your toothbrush every three to four months.
5. Visit your dentist every six months.



Stay away from sticky foods like toffee or hard candy. Avoid eating high sugar, fatty and salty snacks, such as candy and potato chips. Be sure to brush and rinse after you indulge.

Drink water throughout the day. Water helps rinse the mouth and is a healthy alternative to sugary juices, soft drinks and other beverages. Drinking water helps not only your oral health, but your overall health, as well!

Limit snacking between meals. When the sugar in food mixes with certain bacteria in the mouth, acid is created. Eating throughout the day constantly exposes your teeth to these acids that wear down the enamel—or protective outer layer—of your teeth. If you find you must have a “little something” to hold you over, choose a snack that’s low in sugar.

Drink soft drinks in one sitting—don’t sip them! Sipping allows the sugars and acids in soft drinks to continually coat your teeth and wear away the enamel. Drink soft drinks with a straw positioned toward the back of the mouth and be sure to rinse your mouth with water after you’re finished. Wait at least an hour before brushing so there’s less risk of breaking down the already weakened enamel. (Or better yet, give up drinking sugar-sweetened beverages and soft drinks altogether.)

Don’t chew ice. Your teeth are designed to last a lifetime, but they are made for food only. Chewing ice can cause fracture lines, cracks and chips, which can make the teeth more sensitive and lead to further damage. It can also damage any dental work you may have, leading to pain and costly repairs. Try sugar-free gum instead.

If you must eat them, eat sugary treats with a meal. When you’re eating a meal, extra saliva is produced in your mouth. This saliva helps break down the harmful acids that attack tooth enamel and helps rinse away the sugars.

Munch on aged cheese. Calcium in cheeses like aged cheddar, parmesan and Swiss may help protect tooth enamel from decay and increase saliva production.

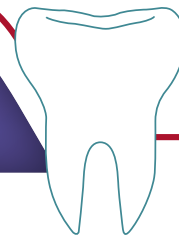
LOG ON TO TRACK

Keep track of your health using the online “Personal Health Record.” Log onto your Member Web site and click on the “Your Health” tab and then “Personal Health Record.” Choose the sections you wish to update and follow the prompts. Remember to update your online record each time you or a family member have a screening or exam.

Personal
Health
Record



Where to Go for More Help



Whether on the Web, on the phone or at the worksite, there are many convenient and accessible wellness resources to help you “have a greater hand in your health.”

🕒 **On the Phone.** For more information about immunizations and vaccines, talk with your health care provider or call a Blues On CallSM Health Coach at 1-888-BLUE-428 (1-888-258-3428).

🕒 **On the Web.** Log onto your Member Web site and click on the “YOUR HEALTH” tab. Select the link “Improve Your Health” to enroll in **HealthMedia**[®] online programs or choose “Preventive Care” to explore other available program options on healthy lifestyles.

Or log onto the following Web sites for information on dental care:

- American Dental Association at www.ada.org
- National Institutes of Health at www.nih.gov
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov



A dentist visit may detect more than just a cavity! If you haven't had a dental check-up within the past six months, call your dentist today!

LOG ON AND LEARN MORE

To learn more about Dental Care and Oral Health, search the HEALTH TOPICS tab on your Highmark Member Web site. Log on at www.highmark.com and select your service region. You can search the site for topics of interest to you and your family and stay up-to-date on the latest in dental care and oral health.



Lifestyle Returns[®]

If your company participates in Lifestyle Returns, you can receive credit for getting your preventive care exams. To access the “Lifestyle Returns” program, log onto your Member Web site. Under “Quick Resources,” click on “Lifestyle Returns” and enter your preventive exams under **Step 3: Take Charge of Your Health.**

The material contained in this Guide has been selected to provide general background and useful information regarding preventive care. It is not intended to be complete or tailored to your specific needs, or to diagnose or treat medical conditions, and does not replace medical advice or medical treatment. You should discuss the information, facts and tips with your doctor, who is always your best resource for determining if you are at an increased risk for a condition. If you engage in physical activity, it may have injuries and health risks associated with it. You should confirm with your doctor that physical activity is appropriate for you. If you experience any pain or discomfort, call your doctor. Highmark Inc. does not endorse any product or service, and does not provide medical or legal advice or medical treatment. If you have questions about your health care coverage, you should call the toll-free Member Service number on your health insurance identification card.

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Sources: Healthwise[®] Knowledgebase; United Concordia