

Tips for good oral health



When to call your dentist

- Clean stains and plaque from your teeth
- Check for early signs of cancer in your mouth
- Check to make sure your dentures are fitting okay
- Identify problems before they become serious and cause pain or infection
- Help prevent tooth loss due to loose teeth, cavities, infection, or gum disease
- Help to check for other medical problems, such as high blood pressure and diabetes
- Check for damage caused by habits such as chewing on ice, biting your nails, grinding your teeth, and smoking

When to call your dentist with concerns

- Chipped tooth
- Constant dull tooth pain
- Gums that bleed when you brush
- Red, tender, or swollen gums or sensitive teeth
- Cracked filling or a cap that comes off a tooth
- Problems with chewing or swallowing
- Changes in the way your dentures fit
- Sores in your mouth that don't heal
- Bad breath or a bad taste in your mouth that doesn't go away after brushing your teeth



Tip:

Most dentists leave an emergency number on their voicemail message for you to call if you have a serious dental problem after their business hours.



FIVE STEPS TO A HEALTHY SMILE

1. Brush your teeth twice a day using a soft bristled toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste.
2. Replace your toothbrush every 3 months.
3. Floss your teeth every day to clean where a toothbrush can't reach.
4. See a dentist at least once a year, even if you have no natural teeth or wear dentures.
5. Drink plenty of water, chew sugarless gum, don't use tobacco products, and limit alcoholic drinks.

Call your dentist right away if you have

- Broken tooth
- Loose or knocked out tooth
- Bleeding that won't stop
- Very painful or throbbing toothache
- Swollen cheek or painful swelling in your cheek or neck
- White bump on your gum that's getting bigger

When to go to the emergency room

- If you are unable to reach your dentist after hours and have severe symptoms or pain
- Your jaw is broken or dislocated
- You have swelling that visibly spreads across the face and down the neck
- You have serious tears, cuts, or punctures inside the cheeks, lips, or tongue
- Heavy bleeding in your mouth that won't stop
- If you have injured your head and also damaged your teeth and jaw

Finding a dentist

If you need help finding a dentist or are having problems getting an appointment with your dentist, please call Delta Dental Member Services at **1 (800) 459-8574** (toll free) (TTY: **711**) from Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. CST.

Transportation assistance

Medica Provide-A-RideSM offers transportation to and from dental appointments to qualified members. For more information, call **1 (888) 347-3630** (toll-free) (TTY: **711**), Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Oral health resources

www.SeniorsOralHealth.org
www.NIDCR.NIH.gov/OralHealth
www.MouthHealthy.org/All-Topics-a-z/Dental-Emergencies
www.Health.State.Mn.US/OralHealth
www.CDC.Gov/OralHealth/Basics

Medica DUAL Solution (HMO D-SNP) and Medica AccessAbility Solution Enhanced (HMO D-SNP) are health plans that contract with both Medicare and the Minnesota Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid) to provide benefits of both programs to enrollees. Enrollment in Medica DUAL Solution and Medica AccessAbility Solution Enhanced depends on contract renewal.

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