

## Five Tips For How You Can Improve Your Oral Health

1

**Eat foods that support good oral health and avoid ones that don't.** Many of the foods we consider healthy are also good for our oral health. These include fruits and veggies, calcium and probiotics. Our mouths have their own collection of bacteria, after all! Bad bacteria thrive on sugar because it makes your mouth more acidic, and bacteria love an acidic environment. It doesn't matter whether the sugar comes from candy, fruit or breads. Limit sweet treats and refined carbohydrates to benefit your overall health, including your oral health.

2

**Keep up with your cleaning!** We all (hopefully!) brush our teeth twice per day. Don't skimp on the flossing-- it helps prevent cavities in between your teeth, and can also help promote fresher breath. Consistency is key when it comes to flossing. Flossing once per month isn't going to cut it. If you just can't get into the habit of flossing, attach it to another habit you have. Leave it out on the bathroom counter so you can remember; start flossing right after brushing; or floss in the shower if you need to!

3

**Be aware that other conditions can affect your oral health.** People with diabetes may be at a higher risk of oral infections and periodontitis (infection of the gums). Maintaining control of blood sugar levels will be key in preventing oral infections, in addition to regular visits to the dentist, and brushing and flossing. Women can also experience changes in oral health in conjunction with hormonal changes during menstruation, pregnancy or menopause. Additionally, if you have acid reflux, you may be more at risk for gingivitis or periodontitis.

4

**Avoid tobacco products.** Smoking or using other tobacco products affects the attachment of bone and soft tissue to your teeth, interfering with the normal function of the gum tissue cells. This puts tobacco users at a higher risk of infection, including periodontal disease. Periodontal disease can cause several conditions that affect the whole body, such as heart disease. Remember, quitting tobacco at any time will improve your life—*it's not too late*.

5

**Don't skip your dentist appointment.** Here's your reminder to get your six-month cleaning scheduled!

SOURCES:

<https://www.healthline.com/health/dental-and-oral-health/tongue-scraping>  
<https://www.healthline.com/health/dental-and-oral-health/salt-water-rinse>  
<https://www.healthline.com/health/dental-and-oral-health#causes>  
<https://www.webmd.com/oral-health/guide/smoking-oral-health>