



Don't Wait Until it Hurts

Reasons why everyone needs to see their Dentist yearly:

Children: Your children should have their first dental visit by age one. A general or pediatric dentist can determine your child's risk for dental disease, and recommend an appropriate dental schedule.

- Never put your baby to bed with a bottle, and limit sippy-cup use to mealtimes only
- Parents or caregivers should brush and floss their children's teeth until they are age 8 to 10, when adequate motor skills develop
- Be sure children use a fluoridated toothpaste at least twice daily, and floss once (at a minimum)
- Limit frequency of sugary drinks and foods to reduce risk of dental decay
- Look for products containing Xylitol, a natural sweetener, which can help prevent tooth decay
- To help prevent dental decay on the chewing surfaces of your child's back teeth, ask your dental provider about dental sealants

Adults: Adults should continue with routine dental visits. Regular dental cleanings and good home care can help to prevent gum disease and dental decay.

- Dental exams include oral cancer screenings, which could save your life
- The early stage of gum disease, called gingivitis, is reversible if diagnosed early

- Late stages of gum disease, called periodontal disease, is a chronic infection which has been linked to systemic inflammation and chronic disease, including diabetes and heart disease
- Periodontal disease can cause chronic bad breath, receding gums, tooth mobility, and tooth loss
- Adults can still develop dental decay; so continue brushing with fluoridated toothpaste, floss regularly, and limit consumption of sugary foods and drinks
- Some prescription and over-the-counter medications cause dry-mouth, which increases the risk for dental decay—especially on exposed root surfaces
- Elderly seniors may require assistance with home care regimens—especially those in residential facilities

Patients with Dentures: Those wearing dentures must still visit their dentist regularly to ensure proper fit, and to be screened for oral cancer.

- Dentures should be removed at night and soaked in denture cleaner
- Brush dentures with paste designated for dentures instead of regular toothpaste (as it can scratch denture material)
- Keep soaking dentures in a secure container and away from pets

