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You and the Dentist

What you need to know about your teeth
Understand your own “oral” health needs

Your oral health depends on many factors:

- Diet
- Amount of saliva in your mouth
- Habits
- Overall health
- Oral hygiene routine
Commit to a daily oral health routine

➢ Follow a daily routine -- come up with a teeth brushing routine that’s easy to follow
Use Fluoride

- Fluoride
  - toothpastes and mouthwashes are a good source of fluoride
  - dentist can prescribe fluoride gels or rinses if you need it
Brush and floss

- Brush at least twice a day (after you eat a meal)
- Floss at least twice a day (after you eat a meal)
Limit snacks

- Every time you eat, pieces of food can get stuck in and around your teeth
- This food builds up as something called “plaque”
- The bacteria in the plaque produce acid every time you eat
Eat a balanced diet

- A balanced diet is important
  - Your body needs to get the right minerals and vitamins so you have good oral and physical health
Examine your mouth regularly

- Examine your mouth weekly. Look for:
  - swollen gums
  - chipped teeth
  - discolored teeth
  - sores or lesions on your gums, cheeks or tongue
Visit your dental office regularly

- Talk to your dentist about how often you should see him or her

- Some people need to visit their dentist more often than others
What to tell your dentist

- Your fears
  - many people have fears of the dentist that go back to childhood
What to tell your dentist

- Your overall health

- Tell your dentist if you have any diseases or are taking any new medications
- Even diseases that are not related to your mouth may mean that the dentists has to use a different approach or treatment
What to tell your dentist

- **Your dental health**
  - If your teeth are sensitive
  - If you think you have a cavity
  - If you feel lumps in your mouth
Checkups

➤ During your visit to the dentist, you may see a:

❖ Dentist

❖ Hygienist
  ✦ will check your gums and teeth, clean and polish your teeth, and talk to you about caring for your teeth and gums properly at home
The Gag Reflex

The Gag Reflex

- Located on the back of the throat -- it helps keep things from going down your windpipe

- If you have ever put your fingers too far back in your mouth and felt like gagging or throwing up, you've discovered the gag reflex!

- Some people have a very sensitive gag reflex, which makes going to the dentist very difficult
Checkups

Cleaning

- a professional dental cleaning is to remove the plaque and tartar from above and below your gums
- brushing and flossing at home removes plaque, but only dental tools can remove tartar
Checkups

Polishing

- After the plaque and tartar is removed, your teeth may be polished to remove stains

- A gritty feeling paste is applied to the teeth with a small rotating brush to scrub away the stains
Checkups

Prevention

- the hygienist may give you tips on taking care of your teeth at home and teach you how to brush and floss correctly
Checkups

- X-rays may be taken during your checkup to help the dentist see your whole mouth
Checkups

➢ Treatment

❖ If your dentist finds any problems during the exam and cleaning, he or she will tell you what needs to happen to fix them

✧ a referral to a specialist (such as a “periodontist” or “orthodontist”)

✧ come back for more test

✧ come back for more intensive cleanings
Thank you!