



GUM HEALTH AND AGING

Proper oral care can keep you smiling for life. Contrary to common belief, tooth loss is primarily the result of oral disease and not a result of the aging process. Taking care of your teeth can help them last a lifetime.



WHAT ARE SOME OF THE MOST COMMON DENTAL PROBLEMS AMONG THE ELDERLY?

Dry mouth

Saliva plays a major role in preventing tooth decay as it rinses away bacteria & food particles and also neutralizes harmful acids in the mouth. However, taking regular medications can interfere with the production of saliva and increase the risk of:

- Mouth sores
- Gum disease and tooth decay
- Yeast infection in the mouth (thrush)

Gum disease

Receding gums are a very common occurrence in older adults. This is when the gum tissue pulls away from the tooth and exposes the base or root of the tooth, which makes it easy for bacteria to build up and cause gum inflammation & tooth decay. Gum disease is one of the most common cause for receding gums.

- Gingivitis is an early type of gum disease. It occurs when plaque and tartar build up irritate and inflame the gums.
- Severe gum disease is called periodontitis. It can lead to loss of teeth.

Mouth ulcers

Broken teeth, poorly-fitted dentures or sharp pieces of food can often be the cause of ulcers. Once the cause is removed, ulcers should heal within 3 weeks, if not, you should see a dentist right away.

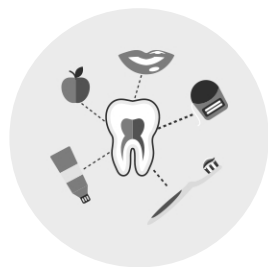
Tooth decay

Dental plaque that causes gum inflammation also causes tooth decay, especially if you often have sugary foods and drinks. This can lead to the risk of decay at the gum edge when the gum has receded as the 'neck' of the tooth is not protected by enamel.



DID YOU KNOW?

If you have difficulty in gripping a toothbrush handle, especially if you have arthritis, you can get handle adapters.



WHAT SHOULD YOU DO TO MAINTAIN ORAL HEALTH?

- Brush your teeth twice a day for 2 minutes. Ideally, use a toothpaste that contains fluoride and zinc like Pepsodent GumCare that fights dental plaque and is clinically proven to reduce gum problems
- Thoroughly remove plaque from your teeth or dentures at night and at least once during the day.
- Reduce intake of sugary foods and drinks
- Watch out for any changes in your mouth.
- Consult your dentist at regular interval for check-up and cleaning.

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