



DAILY ORAL HYGIENE TIPS

Do you know the best way to regularly care for your teeth? The more studies that come out, the more obvious it is that oral health is connected to overall health. That's why it is especially important to maintain good oral health as you age. Whether you are an older adult or are a caregiver for a relative or friend, the same lessons we learned as children still apply now.

BRUSHING

- Brush your teeth twice a day for at least two minutes each time, using a soft-bristled brush and a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Remove dentures or partials before brushing.
- If you have trouble swallowing, use less toothpaste or none at all; the most important part is the actual act of brushing away food and plaque.
- Consider a child-sized toothbrush or electric toothbrush if you have dexterity issues.
- For caregivers helping older adults brush their teeth, keep in mind that tooth brushing can be done anywhere that is easiest for the older adult with just a towel, a bowl, and a cup of water.

FLOSSING

- Floss once a day, using about 18 inches of floss. Wrap the floss around your middle fingers on both hands. Wrap used floss around one finger as it gets used.
- You can use floss holders and threaders to make flossing easier, especially under bridges.

Information for this flyer was taken from the following articles: "Toothbrushing Tips for Caregivers," by Ellen Gould, RDH, MPA, Polished LLC; "Flossing Tips for Caregivers," by Sandie Nagel Beebe, RDH, PhD, Senior Lecturer Southern Illinois University, Carbondale.

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