

# Dependent Seniors

(needing special care)



## Common problems and Oral Care Tips



Knowing how to manage your oral health depending on your stage in life means you can make informed decisions about helping your teeth last a lifetime.

### Dependent Seniors

- Seniors needing special care

### Dependent Seniors PLUS

- Dependent Seniors needing extra care

### Overview

As a Dependent Senior, you may be physically or mentally challenged, taking special medication or undergoing radiation / chemotherapy treatment making it increasingly difficult to maintain your oral health and often needing help from a caregiver.

As a Dependent Senior Plus, you are likely to be restricted to bed rest and dependent on a caregiver.

Clean mouth =  
less medical complications

### Common Problems Checklist

|  | YES                      | NO                       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Pain or discomfort in your teeth or gums  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Dentures do not fit properly  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Loose teeth   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Swollen or bleeding gums  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Sharp / broken teeth  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Problems with chewing   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Pain restricts what food you can eat  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Pain when having hot or cold food/drinks  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Bad Breath  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Dry mouth  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. Any lesion in the mouth (persistent white/ red spots/ patches/ ulcers/new lumps) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. Any ongoing medical condition  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. Need a caregiver for oral hygiene maintenance                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## Good Oral Health Habits

### Dependent Seniors

- Brush twice a day using a soft, slim tip bristle toothbrush. Use of power toothbrush is optional
- Use a high fluoride toothpaste with up to 5000ppm, or as advised by your dentist
- Rinse daily with an 900ppm fluoride, alcohol-free mouthrinse, or as advised by your dentist
- Visit the dentist at least every 6 months (twice a year) for teeth cleaning and caries prevention with fluoride varnish treatment and further treatment as required

### Dependent Seniors PLUS

- Twice daily toothbrushing with soft toothbrush or cleaning (at least once daily) performed by caregiver
- Mouth swab dipped into chlorhexidine mouthwash is recommended when tooth brushing is not possible
- Use a high fluoride toothpaste with up to 5000ppm, or as advised by your dentist
- Dental checkup twice a year for teeth cleaning, caries prevention with high concentration fluoride varnish application and other dental treatment when required.

## Caregiver Guide

### Recognising common signs of infection and oral lesions

- Red , swollen, bleeding gums
- Broken/sharp/loose teeth
- Persistent white/red spots/ patches or new lumps
- Pain in teeth or gums when eating, drinking or tooth brushing
- Dry cracked tongue with white coating

*Bring a list of medications and advise dentist of any recent changes in medication*

*Regular dental checkups (at least twice a year)*

### How to conduct assisted brushing and interdental cleaning

- If person is in a wheelchair - stand behind him/her when helping with tooth brushing
- If the brushing is in seated position, sitting knee to knee will increase the ability for the caregiver to see in the mouth.
- For bedridden seniors, raise the head to 45 degree during oral care, to prevent choking.



## Other recommendations

### Dependent Seniors

- Be actively involved in keeping your mouth healthy for better overall health
- Drink more water every day and have a balanced diet
- Make sure your carers, dentist and medical team are aware of your condition and medications you are taking
- Your dentist may suggest caries preventive treatment such as a high fluoride varnish application and/or the use of a high fluoride (5000ppm) toothpaste
- Ask your dentist about proper denture care
- Avoid smoking

*See recommendations for Caregiver if applicable*

### Dependent Seniors PLUS

- Frequent water intake, balanced diet
- Talk to the medical doctor about dental impact of medication
- Your dentist may suggest caries preventive treatment such as a high fluoride varnish application and/or the use of a high fluoride (5000ppm) toothpaste
- Ask your dentist about proper denture care



Dentist's info:

