

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	☐	☐
2. Dentures do not fit properly	☐	☐
3. Loose teeth	☐	☐
4. Swollen or bleeding gums	☐	☐
5. Sharp / broken teeth	☐	☐
6. Problems with chewing	☐	☐
7. Pain restricts what food you can eat	☐	☐
8. Pain when having hot or cold food/drinks	☐	☐
9. Bad Breath	☐	☐
10. Dry mouth	☐	☐
11. Any lesion in the mouth (persistent white/ red spots/ patches/ ulcers/new lumps)	☐	☐
12. Any ongoing medical condition	☐	☐
13. Need a caregiver for oral hygiene maintenance	☐	☐



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 a fluoride, alcohol-free mouthrinse, or as advised by your dentist
- Dental check at least every 6 months (twice a year) with 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:

