



The Importance of Preventive Dental Care

Preventive oral care strategies for children and adults include a number of in-office and home care activities, including:

At-home oral hygiene. The most important prevention technique is brushing and flossing at least twice a day (or after every meal) to remove dental plaque, a film-like coating that forms on your teeth.

Fluoride use. Fluoride strengthens teeth and prevents tooth decay. Fluoride treatments are provided in dental offices, and dentists recommend using fluoride toothpastes and mouth rinses at home. Public water fluoridation provides a major source of fluoride.

Diet. A balanced diet is a dental health essential. Foods with sugars and carbohydrates feed the bacteria that produce dental plaque, while calcium-poor diets increase your chances of developing gum (periodontal) disease and jaw deterioration.

Regular dental visits. Since most dental conditions are painless at first, if you don't regularly visit your dentist, you may not be aware of dental problems until they cause significant damage.

Dental cleanings and screenings. A dental cleaning (prophylaxis) is recommended every six months to remove dental plaque and stains you're unable to remove yourself, as well as to check for signs of tooth decay.

Sealants. Sealants are thin composite coatings placed on the chewing surfaces of back permanent teeth to protect your child from tooth decay.

Avoid smoking and drinking. Smoking, chewing tobacco and alcohol consumption can negatively affect your oral health.

Oral health management. Consistent dental care for chronic dental diseases/conditions is essential for arresting or reversing their harmful effects.

Considering that oral health is linked to overall health, preventive dentistry is important to your overall well being. Oral diseases can interfere with eating, speaking, daily activities and self-esteem.

In children, severe decay can affect growth and development. Preventive dentistry can result in less extensive – and less expensive – treatment for any dental conditions that may develop, and help you keep your natural teeth for a lifetime.

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