

thinking ahead...

 Gallagher Benefit Services, Inc.



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October 17, 2011

WELLNESS WEEKLY

Dental Hygiene

With proper care, your teeth and gums can stay healthy throughout your life. The healthier your teeth and gums are, the less risk you have for tooth decay and gum disease.

Choosing the right foods in your diet is an important aspect in having healthy teeth and good oral hygiene. Establishing good nutritional habits early can be especially beneficial for good eating patterns and food choices throughout your entire life.

The foods that you eat come in contact with the germs and bacteria that live in the mouth. If you don't brush, plaque will accumulate on the teeth. Plaque thrives on the starches and sugars that are found in a great deal of foods. When plaque combines with the sugars and starches, an acid is produced that attacks enamel on the teeth, and eventually causes decay.

While eating healthy foods and avoiding snacks and drinks that are high in sugar are good ways to prevent cavities, a good dental regime is essential in maintaining healthy teeth and gums.

Listed below are the top five things you can do to keep your teeth and gums healthy:

1. Brushing

It is recommended that you brush your teeth at least twice a day, or after every meal. Choose a toothbrush that fits nicely in your mouth and has soft bristles. This will prevent tissue damage of the gums. Replace your toothbrush every three to four months.

2. Flossing

It is always a good practice to floss your teeth every time after you brush your teeth. Flossing daily helps remove any left over food particles that your tooth brush missed, and prevents plaque from building up.

3. Fluoride

Always brush with a fluoride toothpaste and make sure that the brand of tooth paste you buy is recommended by the American Dental Association (ADA).

4 Dental Checkups and Cleanings

It is highly recommended that you visit your dentist twice a year for a cleaning in order to dislodge any tartar that cannot be removed by flossing or brushing. Visit your dentist at least once a year for a regular checkup.

5. Nutrition

Eat foods that require a lot of chewing, such as whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. Avoid a lot of sugary foods such as candy and syrups.

Talk to your dentist if you have additional questions regarding oral hygiene and don't forget to look for the ADA Seal on oral hygiene products for assurance that it has met ADA criteria for safety and effectiveness.