

HEALTHY SMILES FOREVER

SIMPLE WAYS TO KEEP A LASTING SMILE

- ✓ **Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste**
Fluoride toothpaste helps fight decay and protects teeth.
- ✓ **Use a soft-bristle toothbrush and brush for 2 minutes**
Adult size brush is used on inside, outside and chewing parts of teeth.
Brush tongue and replace toothbrush every 2-3 months or after illness or flu.
- ✓ **Use dental floss or toothpicks**
Floss and toothpicks clean where brushes miss. Slowly move floss between the teeth and carefully rub the side of each tooth. A floss holder can be helpful in placing and using the floss correctly.
- ✓ **Have regular dental checkups, even if you have dentures**
Treat problems early, before they become painful. Dentists can check how dentures are fitting and screen for mouth cancer.
- ✓ **Limit snacks, sodas, sugared candy or cough drops**
Bacteria in mouth make acid from sweet and snack foods that then damages teeth. Frequent snacking and eating sugar foods often result in tooth decay.
- ✓ **Don't use tobacco**
Smoking and using spit tobacco can cause gum disease and mouth cancer.
- ✓ **Check your mouth regularly for sores**
Cancer can appear anywhere in the mouth and is often painless. A lump, bump or sore in the mouth that does not heal in two weeks, see dentist, dental hygienist or physician.
- ✓ **Understand the dangers of dry mouth**
Saliva or spit washes and protects the mouth. Dry mouth makes it hard to eat, swallow, taste, or even speak. Dry mouth can cause tooth decay and other infections of the mouth. Drink water regularly throughout the day.
- ✓ **Ask your dentist or dental hygienist about fluoride varnish and use of fluoridated water**
Fluoride placed directly on the teeth adds extra protection against decay.

42% of Arizona adults over 65 years have lost six or more teeth due to decay or gum disease

Arizona's older adults are unable to get affordable dental care

Good dental health is important for overall general health



GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING