

DENTAL CLINIC ORAL HYGIENE TIPS

With nationwide campus closures and shelter-in-place mandates in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to maintain proper oral hygiene and health in order to help reduce the risk of requiring emergency dental procedures. Access to dental care is extremely limited at this time and it is unclear when the dental community will be able to provide our patients with the comprehensive care that we have grown accustomed to. For more information please call UCR Student Health Services Dental Clinic at 951 827-3039. In the meantime, here are a few tips to help minimize your risk.



► BRUSHING YOUR TEETH

- Choose a fluoride toothpaste to help prevent cavities.
- Brush your teeth at least 2 times daily (preferably morning and night).
- Brush for at least 2 minutes (30 seconds per quadrant).
- Hold the toothbrush at a 45 degree angle against your teeth and aimed towards the gumline.
- Use gentle pressure to brush back and forth and up and down in short strokes.
- Brush all surfaces of the tooth (inside, outside, chewing surfaces, and spaces between the teeth) thoroughly.
- Use a soft bristled toothbrush with light pressure; avoid medium or hard bristle brushes.

► BRUSHING YOUR TONGUE

- Brush your tongue after you brush your teeth at least two times a day.
- Brushing your tongue will remove bacteria and help with bad breath odor.
- Place a small amount of toothpaste on your toothbrush and gently brush the front and back of the tongue.
- Start at the back and move forward remembering to scrub both side to side and up and down.





► FLOSSING YOUR TEETH

- Floss your teeth at least once a day (preferably at night before bed). Brushing alone cannot reach in between the teeth. The plaque needs to be disrupted and removed daily; as plaque forms every 24 hours.
- Use a generous length of floss (a good reference to use would be the distance from your elbow to the tip of your fingers).
- Wrap most of the floss around each middle finger, leaving an inch or two of floss to work with.
- Holding the floss tautly between your thumbs and index fingers, slide it gently up-and-down between your teeth while keeping slight pressure against the surface you are addressing.
- Gently curve the floss around the base of each tooth, making sure you go beneath the gumline. Never snap or force the floss, as this may cut or bruise delicate gum tissue.
- Use clean sections of floss as you move from tooth to tooth
- **DO NOT** avoid flossing daily because your gums bleed while doing so. Normal healthy gums do not bleed when brushed or flossed. Bleeding is a sign of inflammation and this is due to the presence of local irritants; i.e., bacteria in plaque or tartar.

NOTE: If you have difficulty flossing due to access, mobility, or manual dexterity there are floss aids available at local drug stores that can help.



► RINSING WITH MOUTHWASH

- After both brushing and flossing you may want to rinse with a fluoride mouth rinse of your choice (preferably an alcohol free rinse to prevent xerostomia also known as dry mouth).
- Swish the rinse for 30 sec. to 1 min. (use as directed).
- Eliminate the rinse by spitting. Do not swallow the rinse.

