



Dental & Oral Hygiene



Preventing cavities and diseases in our mouths is such an important part of our health that often goes unnoticed. Oral hygiene is important for all ages, 0-100, and starts at home. Here are a few steps you can take at every age to make sure your teeth and gums are healthy and taken care of.

Children can develop the habit of brushing their teeth as young as age 2 or 3. Using a soft brush and water, help them get all the surfaces of their mouth clean. Once they are 4 or 5 years old, kids can start brushing twice a day for 2 minutes with a fluoride toothpaste that will help prevent cavities. Making teeth brushing a part of their daily routine will help create lifelong habits. When permanent teeth start to come in, children can start to floss daily and continue that habit into adulthood.

As we age, oral health is often overlooked, but is just as important as ever. Aging and chronic diseases may increase the chances of developing gum disease, tooth decay, and tooth loss. For those with dentures, make sure to remove them at night and brush them thoroughly before placing them in water when they aren't being used. Arthritis can start to make holding a toothbrush uncomfortable. Consider getting a tooth brush with a thicker handle to help ease discomfort.

Oral care is also an important part of prenatal care. Pregnant women who are experiencing nausea should rinse out their mouth thoroughly after being sick. Gum disease is quite common in pregnant women due to hormonal changes. Taking good care of your mouth and visiting the dentist while pregnant is a great way to keep both mom and baby healthy.

Fluoride water is great for strengthening teeth and preventing tooth decay. Fortunately for Kittson County and the majority of Minnesota, there is fluoride in our drinking water which helps our oral health tremendously. Be sure to schedule a dental appointment every 6-12 months to check for cavities and a professional cleaning. Prioritizing your oral health and keeping a strict schedule is something you won't regret. Start taking care of your smile today.

For more information on dental hygiene visit www.cdc.gov/OralHealth.

This information is brought to you by Kittson Healthcare and Kittson Healthcare Public Health Department.