



The Ultimate Guide to DENTAL HEALTH During COVID-19

Best Practices for Healthy Teeth
and Gums During a Pandemic
from AAID Dentists

AAID
AMERICAN ACADEMY
OF IMPLANT DENTISTRY

As you stay home and help curb the spread of COVID-19, you are adjusting to new life routines. On a long list of changes, one is avoiding non-urgent doctor visits — and that includes your dentist.

While oral hygiene may not be on top of your mind right now, a healthy immune system is critical during a pandemic and your mouth is a gateway for viruses and bacteria to enter your body. Keeping your mouth in tip top shape frees your immune system to fight off other sicknesses as needed.

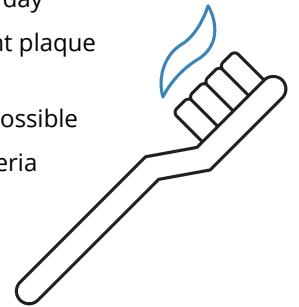
To ensure you maintain a healthy smile while you stay home, we have put together *The Ultimate Guide to Dental Care During COVID-19* so you can brush up on the basics and learn some additional precautions to take during this pandemic:



1. Properly clean your teeth, tongue, and gums

One of the best ways to keep your mouth in good shape is maintaining a good oral hygiene routine. Following these simple steps can help you maintain a healthy smile and prevent problems:

- Brush your teeth twice a day — when you wake up, before going to sleep or after every meal
- Floss your teeth at least once every day
- Gently brush your tongue to prevent plaque build up
- Switch to an electric toothbrush if possible
- Gargle with mouth rinse to kill bacteria and remove plaque



2. Watch what you eat

Have you ever had a popcorn kernel stuck in your gum? Or hurt your tooth from chewing a hard candy? These would be unfortunate scenarios during the shelter in place, so think twice before eating something that may get easily stuck in your teeth. You should stock up on nutritious foods. Your teeth especially benefit from leafy greens as they are rich in fiber and vitamins and items that are high in calcium and protein such as low-sugar yogurt. Try to limit your consumption of sweets and acidic beverages as they can cause tooth decay.



3. Stay hydrated

Good hydration is an essential part of oral health. Drink plenty of water to help strengthen your enamel. It helps rinse away harmful bacteria and acid and may ease dry mouth, which can cause gum disease and tooth decay.



4. Resist bad stress habits

It's a scary and uncertain time right now. Everyone manages stress in different ways and certain coping mechanisms like smoking or drinking alcohol can be harmful. Smoking increases your risk for gum infections, and drinking alcohol dries out cheeks and gums. Additionally, chewing pen caps or fingernails can cause teeth to chip or break. Be extra thoughtful about how you choose to relieve stress to avoid a potential emergency.



5. Freshen your toothbrush

Toothbrushes can potentially harbor bacteria and viruses. Before and after use, rinse the bristles under warm water and let it dry standing upright without touching the heads of other toothbrushes. If you are concerned about the cleanliness of your toothbrush or if you have just been sick, you can disinfect it by soaking it in 1% hydrogen peroxide (1 part store bought 3% hydrogen peroxide and 2 parts water) for 30 seconds or you can replace it.



6. Keep over-the-counter pain relievers on hand

In case a toothache or swollen gums develop, it's always a good idea to be prepared with over-the-counter pain relievers like acetaminophen to temporarily ease symptoms while you wait to hear from your dentist.



7. Text or call your dentist

If you do experience a dental problem or emergency, your dentist is still here for you. Many doctors are communicating with patients through texts, phone calls, and video calls. Reach out to your provider to see how they can help answer your questions.





Keeping your mouth healthy is incredibly important — and there's an additional level of care to follow if you're a candidate for dental implants.

When you are again allowed to schedule an appointment, qualified dentists will look at the entire picture of your health to ensure the dental implant procedure will be a success. Here are 5 good habits to build right now:

1. Brush your teeth twice daily for a full two minutes each time.
2. Floss at least once a day. If there is enough space between your teeth, an interdental brush is recommended. Soft-picks can also be used when the space between the teeth is smaller.
3. Switch to an electric toothbrush if possible
4. Use antibacterial mouthwash. This helps prevent bacteria from growing and reduce any inflammatory reaction in the mouth.
5. Commit to stop smoking or chewing tobacco to prepare for the procedure.

Go to our blog: LifeSmiles



The AAID blog empowers individuals struggling with dental problems to find reliable, practical information and advice on dental implants and how to find a qualified implant expert. Our goal is to ensure that quality care and peace of mind is available to every dental implant patient.

www.LifeSmiles.blog



If you recently received dental implants, your dentist is still available to ensure you're healing well, even if you had to cancel a follow-up appointment.

As with any dental procedure, you may have some discomfort during healing. Side effects that are normal and expected include:

- Swelling around the gums and in your face
- Slight bruising
- Pain at the implant site
- Minor bleeding

There are also steps you can take to increase the success of your dental implants:

- Avoid eating hard foods
- Take pain medication and antibiotics (when prescribed)
- Keep your teeth, gums, and dental work clean — brushing twice a day and flossing once a day
- Commit to stop smoking and chewing tobacco while healing

If at any time during the healing process you find that issues are getting worse or are causing increased discomfort, contact your dentist right away to make sure the problems don't persist.



ABOUT AAID

Established in 1951, the American Academy of Implant Dentistry (AAID) is the first professional organization in the world dedicated to the advancement of implant dentistry.

AAID dentists invest significant time and energy into dental implant-focused training, above and beyond their basic dental and/or specialist education. Because they have a thorough knowledge of all aspects of dental implants and treatment options, they understand the big picture — and they're dedicated to putting your smile, your needs and your health first.

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The AAID strives to provide practical information and advice on dental implants. To learn more and to find a qualified implant expert, visit us at:



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