

## Seniors keep on smiling with good oral health

(NC) The need for good oral health continues as a person ages, becomes chronically ill or moves to a long-term care residence. Unfortunately, many older adults, especially those who rely on others for care, have poor oral hygiene and high rates of oral disease.

Oral diseases can cause pain, discomfort, bad breath, and difficulties chewing and swallowing. They are also associated with more serious health complications like diabetes, stroke, and heart and lung diseases. Fortunately, daily mouth care can remove food debris and bacteria that grow on gums, teeth and dentures, improving oral and overall health.

Dental hygienists encourage all older adults to brush their teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and clean between their teeth once a day. Denture wearers should remove their dentures at night to clean them and allow their gum tissue to breathe while sleeping. They should also clean any remaining teeth twice daily and brush and massage their gums either with a soft toothbrush or a warm damp cloth. Caregivers must help when these tasks become challenging.

Whether you're at home or in a long-term care residence, daily mouth and denture care coupled with professional oral care from a dental hygienist can help prevent oral diseases, reduce the risk of health complications, and keep you smiling.

Find more information at [dentalhygienecanada.ca/seniors](https://dentalhygienecanada.ca/seniors).