6 Ways to Care for Your Mouth That Help You Stay Healthy

- **Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.** Keeping your teeth and gums clean can prevent cavities and gum disease.

- **Visit the dentist regularly.** Checkups can find tooth decay, gum disease, and other problems before they lead to more serious issues like tooth loss.

- **Drink fluoridated water to keep teeth strong and reduce cavities.**

- **Avoid all forms of tobacco and limit alcohol.** Smokers have twice the risk of gum disease compared to nonsmokers. Excessive alcohol use combined with tobacco use causes at least 75% of head and neck cancers.

- **Avoid sugary snacks and drinks, which can lead to tooth decay, obesity, type 2 diabetes, and other health problems.**

- **If you have diabetes, work with your doctor to keep your blood sugar close to your target level.** High blood sugar increases the risk of tooth decay and gum disease.

Learn more about how good oral health is important for overall health at [www.cdc.gov/oralhealth](http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth).