

## Wellness Articles

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If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: [Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca). You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

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## Taking care of your teeth

April is Oral Health Month. As you get older, your mouth health can be affected by aging, diseases, or medicines you take. Prevention is the best way to keep your mouth healthy at any age. This includes brushing and flossing every day and visiting the dentist regularly. A healthy mouth is important for a healthy body and mind.

Older adults have some of the highest rates of tooth decay. You can get more tooth decay when you:

- Find it hard to clean your teeth.
- Choose sugary foods and drinks more often because of changes in your taste.
- Have a dry mouth because of a disease or medicines you take.
- Have teeth with roots that aren't covered by gums.

The good news is you can prevent tooth decay. Brush two times a day with fluoride toothpaste, floss every day, and limit sugary foods and drinks. And make sure to visit your dentist regularly.

### **Gum disease doesn't have to be part of getting older.**

As you get older, it's easier to get gum disease and harder to get rid of it. Gum disease is caused by plaque left on your teeth and gums. Having a dry mouth, using tobacco, and drinking alcohol can make gum disease worse. For healthy gums, brush and floss daily, eat a variety of healthy foods each day, and get your teeth cleaned regularly. Also, avoid using tobacco and limit how much alcohol you drink. If you have signs of a dry mouth, ask your doctor or dentist for help.