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# ORAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE

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# ORAL HEALTH CARE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Developmental disabilities affect the mind, the body and the skills people use in everyday life. People with disabilities often need extra help to achieve and maintain good oral health.



# ORAL HEALTH CARE - YOUR ROLE AS A DSP

- Be patient; many people are afraid of dental care and may have had a negative experience in the past
- Watch your tone! Use your body and voice to help communicate that you care.
- Give positive feedback
- Be creative! Make it a positive experience with favorite music or a comfort item to hold



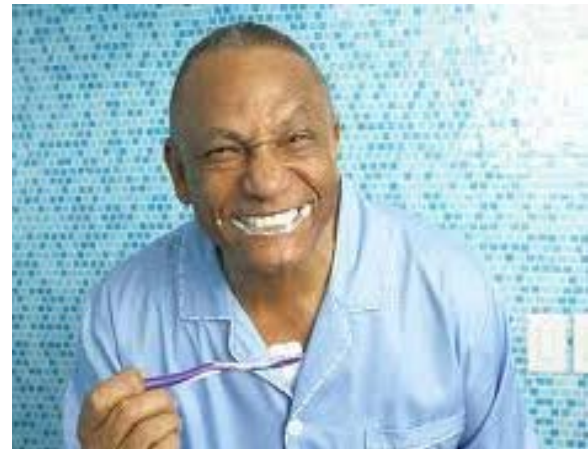
# HEALTH CHALLENGES

- Mental Capabilities
- Behavior Problems
- Mobility Problems
- Neuromuscular Problems
- Uncontrolled Body Movements
- Cardiac Disorders
- Gastroesophageal Reflux
- Seizures
- Visual Impairments
- Hearing Loss and Deafness
- Latex Allergies



# STRUCTURE THE ENVIRONMENT

- Establish a routine
  - Specific time of day
  - Try not to take someone away from activity already underway
- Minimize boredom
- Minimize distractions
- Unpleasant associations
  - Sounds
  - People
- Nagging
- Minimize interruptions



# BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

- Create a caring and relaxed environment
- Schedule appointments at an appropriate time of day
- Use behavior modification techniques
- Positive reinforcement
- Distraction via television or music
- Desensitization
- Voice control (no loud talking)
- Immobilize (only if necessary) with protective devices and restraints
- Sedation
- General anesthesia



# DDS REQUIREMENTS

- At least 2 visual and tactile dental visits (includes scaling/prophylaxis) per year
- 1-2 radiographs per year
- 1-2 soft tissue evaluations for those without natural teeth
- No more than every 3 years, full mouth rehabilitation if necessary

\* See the DDS Medical/Dental Policy for additional requirements



# THE MOUTH

Your mouth is important because it helps you to:

**Eat/Chew**

**Speak**

**Smile**

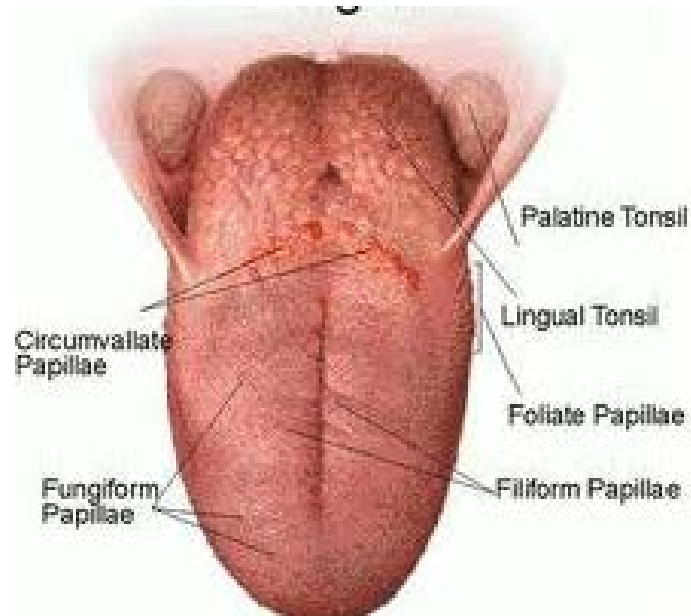
**Frown**

**Drink**





# PARTS OF THE MOUTH



# COMMON ORAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

- Cavities
- Pain
- Swelling
- Bleeding Gums
- Infection
- Loose Teeth



## REMEMBER: AS WE GET OLDER...

- Soft tissue around teeth, harden
- Pain perception is reduced making it difficult to detect painful toothaches
- Gums recede from teeth (may cause pain along the gum line)
- Mouth tends to be dry making it more vulnerable to tooth decay and infection



# PLAQUE

- Saliva and/or food debris that sticks to the surface of teeth
- Holds bacteria next to tooth
- Bacteria uses sugar to make acid
- Acid irritates gums and decays teeth
- Brush teeth everyday to get rid of plaque and bacteria



# CAVITIES

- Cavities are holes in your teeth
- Cavities are formed when the bacteria (germs) in the mouth uses the sugar in food to make acid
- The acid eats away at teeth



# HOW DO YOU GET CAVITIES?

- Eating sugary foods and liquids frequently throughout the day
- Not brushing teeth daily
- Not flossing daily
- Not using fluoride toothpaste
- Not visiting the dentist on a regular basis

Note: Many medicines have sugar too!



# PREVENTING CAVITIES AND PLAQUE BUILD-UP

- Brush teeth **at least 2 times** every day (once in the morning and once before bedtime)
- Use fluoride toothpaste and a toothbrush with soft flexible bristles
- Floss **at least 1 time** every day
- See the dentist **at least 2 times** every year
- **Don't snack on sugary foods**



# HOW TO BRUSH

- Put a pea-size amount of fluoride toothpaste on a soft bristled toothbrush
- Place the toothbrush alongside the teeth.
- **Gently** move the brush in a small circular motion cleaning 1 tooth at a time.
- Brush teeth for 2 minutes.
- Brush everywhere! That includes the top & both sides of teeth
- **Brush the tongue and the roof of the mouth**
- Get a new toothbrush with soft flexible bristles at least every 3 months





# REMEMBER - BE FLEXIBLE!

- Teeth brushing can occur anywhere as long as you have your supplies:
  - Toothbrush
  - Toothpaste
  - Floss
  - Bowl or glass of water
  - Good lighting



# BRUSHING

## STEP 1



**1. Place your toothbrush at a 45 degree angle to your gums.**



# BRUSHING

## STEP 2



**2. Brush gently in a circular motion.**



# BRUSHING

## STEP 3



**3. Brush the outer, inner, and chewing surfaces of each tooth.**



# BRUSHING

## STEP 4



**4. Use the tip of your brush for the inner surface of your front teeth.**



# “TELL-SHOW-DO” APPROACH

- **TELL** the individual each step before you do it
- **SHOW** how you are going to do each step before you do it
- **DO** the steps in the same way you explained



## IF AN INDIVIDUAL IS UNABLE TO BRUSH HIS/HER OWN TEETH...

- Wash YOUR hands and put on disposable gloves
- Use a soft bristle toothbrush
- Apply a pea-sized amount of toothpaste to the toothbrush
- Brush front, back and top of each tooth
- Brush tongue
- Rinse with plain water or sweep out with gauze



# POSITIONING



Positioning for treating a patient in a wheelchair.







Stand behind the person or lean against a wall for additional support. Use your arm to hold the person's head gently against your body.

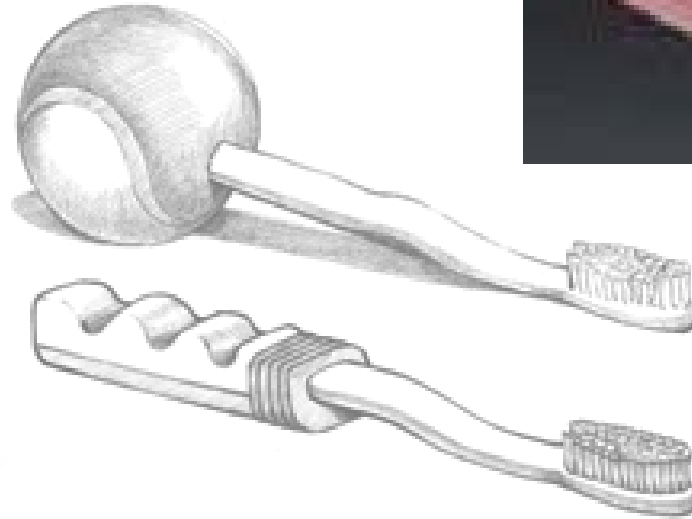




If the person you're helping is in a wheelchair, sit behind it. Lock the wheels, then tilt the chair into your lap.



# EXAMPLES OF TOOTHBRUSHES



# SUCCESSFUL BRUSHING WITH YOUR ASSISTANCE

- Make the toothbrush easier to hold (Velcro strap)
- Make toothbrush handle bigger (tennis balls or bicycle grip)
- Other toothbrush options (electric toothbrushes)
- Hand over hand technique

If you assist with oral hygiene, examine the persons mouth on a regular basis for signs of redness, swelling or bleeding



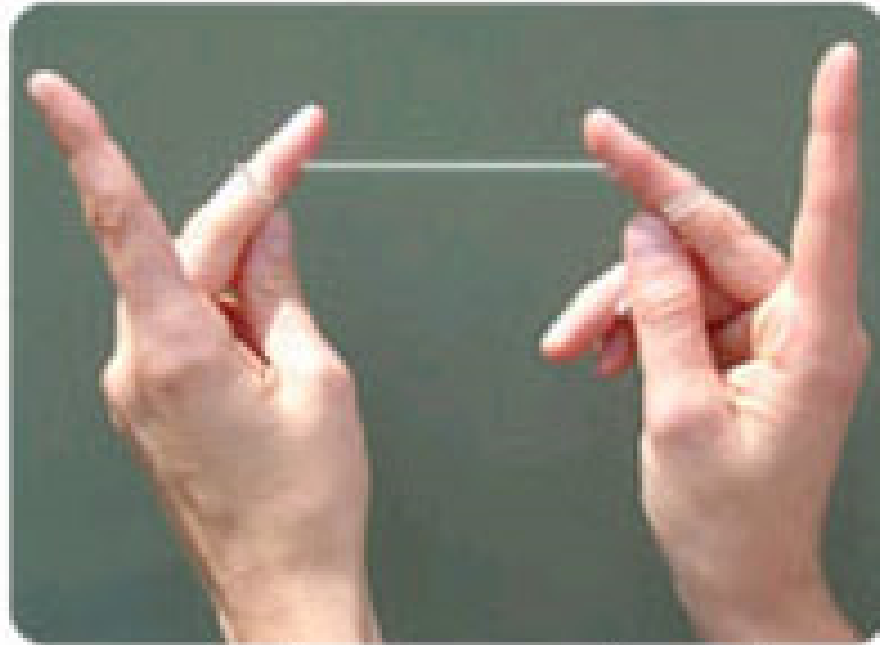
# FLOSSING

- Floss to clean between the teeth
- How to floss:
  - Take about 18 inches of dental floss and wrap one end around each of your middle fingers
  - Use your thumbs and index fingers to gently slide the floss between two teeth, using an up and down motion
  - Once at the gum line, pull both ends of the floss in the same direction to form a C shape against one tooth. Pull the floss tightly and move it up and down against one tooth
  - Push the floss against the other tooth and repeat the motion
  - Do this for all of your teeth



# FLOSSING

## STEP 1

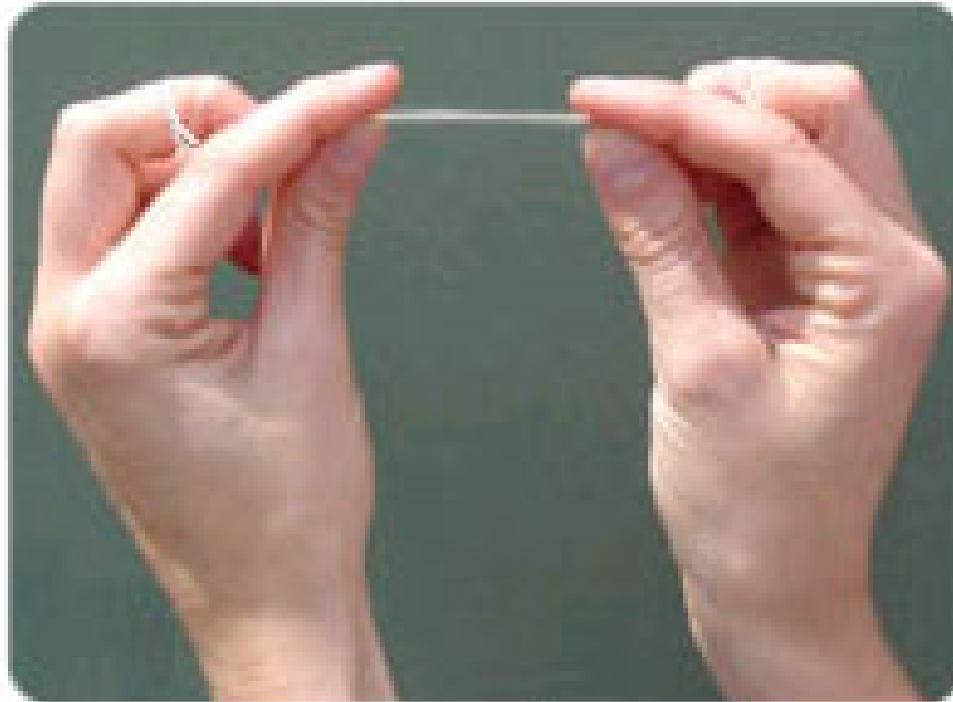


**1. Wind about 18 inches of floss around your fingers as shown. Most of it should be wrapped around one finger, and as the floss is used, the other finger takes it up.**



# FLOSSING

## STEP 2



**2. Use your thumbs and forefingers to guide about one inch of floss between your teeth.**



# FLOSSING

## STEP 3



**3. Holding the floss tightly, gently saw the floss between your teeth. Then curve the floss into a C-shape against one tooth and gently slide it beneath your gums.**





# FLOSSING

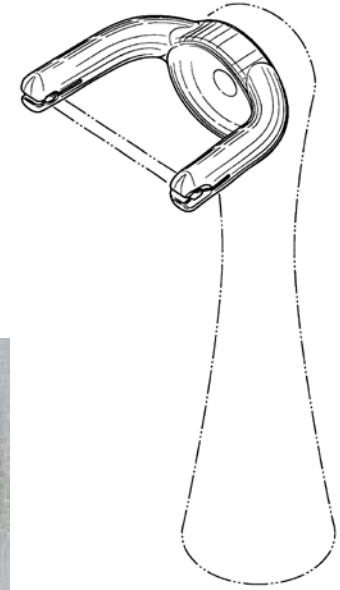
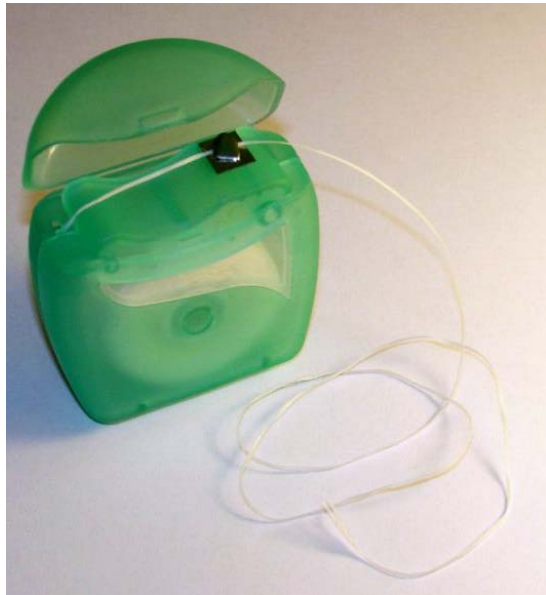
## STEP 4



**4. Slide the floss up and down, repeating for each tooth.**



# EXAMPLES OF FLOSS AND FLOSS HOLDERS



# DENTURE CARE 101

- Dentures also need regular care to ensure a healthy mouth
- Dentures should be checked regularly for proper fit.
- Dentures should be cleaned at least once a day to prevent staining, bad breath and gum irritation.



# WHEN TO CALL THE DENTIST?

- Experiencing toothache
- Broken or cracked tooth
- Bitten lip or tongue
- Jaw (TMJ disorder or broken jaw)
- Knocked out tooth
- Objects caught between teeth
- Any red or white spots or sores that bleed and do not go away within two weeks
- And of course to make your regular appointments



# BE PREPARED FOR THE DENTAL VISIT...

- Visit the dentist to check out the office prior to dental treatment appointment
- Bring the dental or necessary medical records – including the Health Passport
- Bring all insurance and payment information
- Be on time
- Call dentist office before appointment if there are questions



## REMEMBER...

- No developmental disability should be a barrier to proper oral health care
- Start slowly; care and determination can bring positive results
- Proper oral health care will prevent bad breath making it more pleasant for friends, family and other people to be around
- Brushing and flossing daily and regular visits to the dentist will make a HUGE difference in one's quality of life



# RESOURCES:

National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial  
Research

[www.nidcr.nih.gov](http://www.nidcr.nih.gov)

**NIDCR** National Institute of  
Dental and Craniofacial Research  
National Institutes of Health

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Improving the Nation's Oral Health

