

Domain: ADLs

Talking Points

- In the survey you said you had some problems with taking care of yourself, for example, holding a fork or brushing your teeth. Could you tell me a little more about the problems you have.
 - **If person has had a stroke** – someone with a disability like yours – may need a family member, loved one or a health aide to help with daily care of their teeth and mouth. For a person who has had a stroke it is important to check and clean the inside of the cheek on the affected side of the mouth because that is where food can accumulate. Does your aide or other caretaker do a good job of cleaning your teeth and mouth? Do you think there is someone who we could teach to clean your teeth and mouth? There also are dentists who specialize in treating people with special needs.
 - **For someone with arthritis or other physical problems that affect their ability to clean their teeth** – for people who have trouble holding things because of arthritis or another problem such as Parkinson’s disease, there are tools that can help to clean the teeth and mouth; for example, a toothbrush with a big handle or an electronic toothbrush. I can show you how to adjust your toothbrush to make it easier for you to brush. This tubing can also be used with a denture brush to clean your dentures. I can show you how to use a floss handle if you have trouble flossing because of arthritis. Let’s see if these adaptations help.

Domain: Social Support

Talking Points

- In the survey you said that there were only a few if any people you could talk to in the building about getting information about your oral health problems. Could you tell me a little more about what you might like to learn from people in your building about your oral health? And how to get the information and help you would like to have.
 - In the coming months we are planning several programs on oral health and how to take care of your teeth and mouth. There will be a committee of people here from your building that will develop and present materials that we hope will be helpful. These people could be individuals that you could turn to for advice about oral health in the future.
 - Has anyone in the building ever asked you for advice about oral health problems? What did you think of to tell them? If no one has ever asked you, what would you say if someone asked your advice?

Domain: Oral Hygiene Behaviors/Diet

Talking Points

Now let's talk about ways of preventing oral health problems. These would include brushing and flossing your teeth, taking care of your dentures and what you eat and how often.

In the survey you mentioned that you usually brushed your teeth less than two times a day. Can you tell me why you brush your teeth (however many times they say they did) a day? After the person explains you must address their reasons. In addition, you can say that it is good to brush but it's also important to brush at least twice a day and explain why:

- Preventive measures can help you maintain good oral health. It is extremely important that you brush your teeth at least twice a day. Brushing your teeth is especially important at night, before you go to sleep. It is also best to brush your teeth after every meal. While brushing your teeth you should brush your tongue to remove any bacteria that causes bad breath. Brushing your teeth helps to remove plaque that causes cavities and can lead to gum disease.
- In the survey you said that you don't floss or you do floss, but not regularly every day. Can you tell me why you floss when you do, or why you don't floss at all? After the person explains, you can address their reasons, and then say that it's good to floss at least once a day and explain why.
 - Cleaning in between your teeth is also very important to remove plaque that the tooth brush cannot reach. You can use a variety of materials to clean in between your teeth; you can use dental floss, toothpicks, or special brushes. (Show them what they can use, at this point).
- In the survey you said that you had trouble taking care of your dentures/partials (or you said you didn't take your dentures/partials out every night). Could you tell me about the kinds of problems you are having cleaning your dentures/partials (or if appropriate why you don't take your dentures/partials out every time, at night)?
 - It is very important to keep your dentures/partials clean because your dentures/partial can develop plaque in the same way natural teeth do. Plaque on your dentures/partials can irritate your gums and cause bleeding just as it can with natural teeth. (The person may not understand that since the dentures/partials are artificial, they cannot get caries).
 - You should clean your dentures/partials at least twice a day, and after every meal.
 - To clean your dentures/partials, use denture paste or tablets and a denture brush or just soap and water. When you take out your dentures/partials soak them in water. As a precaution, when cleaning your dentures/partials it may be useful to put a towel in the sink and then fill the sink with a small amount of water in case your hands become slippery and your dentures fall into the sink. The towel will cushion the dentures/partials so they are less likely to break.
 - It is extremely important that you take your dentures/partials out before you go to sleep because it allows the gums to breathe and decreases the collection of bacteria that causes infection in your mouth.

- In the survey you said that you frequently eat foods with a lot of sugar and/or starch. Could you tell me about what sweets or starchy foods (like candies, cookies, crackers, bread, rice) you like to eat and how often?*
- It's fine to eat these foods but not all day every day and when you eat them, you should brush your teeth.
 - Starchy foods turn into sugar in your mouth, and sugary foods are linked to higher levels of cavity causing bacteria and feed the bacteria to create acid that destroys the teeth. Tooth decay occurs when acid from bacteria in your mouth attack your teeth.
 - If you eat too much sugary or starchy foods, on a regular basis, it will affect your risk of getting tooth decay and gum disease. Also, if you are eating these foods, and not enough mix of foods – fruits, vegetables, meats and fish, and whole grain breads and noodles – your diet may lack the necessary nutrients and that makes it more likely that you will get gum disease.
 - Foods that cling to your teeth are more likely to cause tooth decay. So when you snack, avoid sticky foods such as cakes, candy and dried fruits and choose foods that are less likely to stick to your teeth such as nuts, raw vegetables, plain yogurt, cheese and sugarless gum or candy.
 - If you want to have a sugary treat, it is best to have it only with a meal rather than exposing your teeth to sugar or starch on a regular basis (say once an hour or so) over long periods of time
 - Finally, brushing with a fluoride tooth paste at least twice a day will help prevent tooth decay and gum disease.
 - And you could brush your teeth after you eat sweet or starchy foods, too.

Domain: Oral Health Norms/Beliefs about Behaviors

Talking Points

Let's talk about some beliefs about going to the dentist. As noted on our focal points form, in the survey you mentioned that you didn't think it was very important to (mention all that apply) Visit the dentist once a year; Brush your teeth at least twice a day; Brush with fluoride toothpaste; Floss or clean between teeth at least once a day; Check for sores in the mouth; Remove dentures/partials at night; Soak dentures/partials in water over night; Clean dentures/partials; Clean gums with gauze or facecloth. Could you tell me why you think (list each behavior that they have checked and ask about each one) this behavior isn't that important?

- Visit the dentist once a year
 - It is important to go to the dentist before you have a problem because if you wait until you have pain, it may be too late – you may already have a serious problem like a deep cavity or an infection. Of course if you do have pain, be sure to go to the dentist immediately to avoid more serious pain or infection. You should go to the dentist at least once a year, even though you may not have all your natural teeth. Prevention is better than a cure and costs less. If you don't know a dentist ask for recommendations for a dentist or free dental clinic from our dental hygienists, our dental educator or from a family member or friend, call the dentist office or have a family member do it for you, to make an appointment.
 - Many oral diseases, such as cavities and gum disease, can be prevented with good oral health care. This includes visiting a dentist at least once a year for a dental exam for a professional cleaning and exam to diagnose disease of the mouth.

- To keep your mouth clean you should brush your teeth at least twice a day; Brush with fluoride toothpaste unless you have dentures in which case you should use denture paste or tablets and a denture brush or soap and water. Floss or clean between teeth at least once a day; check for sores on a regular basis because they could be the beginning of oral cancers.
 - You can maintain oral health by brushing your teeth at least twice a day - of course if you wish, you can brush your teeth more often than that - and especially remembering to brush at night; cleaning between your teeth with dental floss, toothpicks or special brushes; and brushing your tongue and palate.
 - Cleaning between your teeth is very important because that's where food stays; your toothbrush can't reach to get it out, and that allows bacteria to build up and cause cavities or infections in the gums.
 - Use toothpaste that contains fluoride and has the ADA seal on the tube. Explain what the ADA seal is. It is good to have fluoride even if you are an adult because it helps to prevent dental caries (cavities).
 - Toothpaste with baking soda is acceptable, but it doesn't contain the protection of fluoride.
 - Brush after meals and use floss, toothpicks, or special brushes to clean between your teeth. Brushing your teeth helps to remove plaque that causes cavities and can lead to gum disease.
 - You should also brush your tongue to remove bacteria and to help keep your breath fresher.

 - Sores in your mouth may mean that you have oral cancer, or the beginnings of oral

- cancer. Risks for oral cancer include alcohol and tobacco use. A person's ethnic/cultural background may also put them at risk of oral cancer because males, especially African American and Latino males go in for care later than white males and women. Oral cancer rates increases with age.
- In the first stages, oral cancer doesn't necessarily hurt but may cause numbness or tingling. It is important that your dentist check for oral cancer and that you tell the dentist about any lumps, bumps or sores in your mouth or gums.
 - Remove dentures/partials at night; Soak dentures/partials in water over night; clean dentures/partials; clean gums with gauze or facecloth.
 - It is important to keep dentures/partials clean because plaque can stick to the dentures/partials the same as it does to natural teeth. It is not a good idea to sleep with dentures/partials in your mouth. Dentures/partials are made of plastic and taking them out at night allows the gums to breathe and decreases the collection of bacteria that causes infection.
 - Even people with dentures/partials can get mouth infections, especially people with diabetes and those that use inhalers for asthma. If you get an infection (for example candida or thrush), it is necessary to treat both your mouth and the dentures/partials because the bacteria live in both places.
 - To clean your dentures/partials, use denture paste or tablets and a denture brush or just soap and water. When you take out your dentures/partials, soak them in water. As a precaution, when cleaning your dentures/partials it may be useful to put a towel in the sink and then fill the sink with a small amount of water in case your hands become slippery and your dentures/partials fall into the sink. The towel will cushion the dentures/partials so they are less likely to break. Dentures/partials should not be kept in your mouth all night.
 - If you don't have your natural teeth, wrap a moist facecloth around your index finger and clean inside your mouth, including the palate, the gums, the tongue and the insides of the cheek.

Domain Oral Health Self-Efficacy/Locus of Control

Talking Points

Let's talk about how people can prevent decay and loss of teeth. You mentioned that you didn't think that decay could be prevented and that losing your teeth is part of normal aging. Why do you think that decay or tooth loss can't be prevented?

- Even though some people think that dental diseases and decay tooth loss cannot be prevented, everyone can have good oral health if they take care of their teeth and mouths. This includes brushing and cleaning between your teeth and visiting the dentist once a year for a dental exam. It is also important to clean areas where there are gaps between teeth. People with dentures/partials, or those with diabetes or that use inhalers, are more at risk for getting infections (for example candida or thrush). If that happens, your dentist will have to treat both your mouth and your dentures/partials, if you have them.
- If your mouth is dry you are more at risk for getting cavities. You can reduce dry mouth by sipping water regularly.
- If you do these things you can minimize decay and tooth loss.
- Dentures and partials are made of plastic and taking them out at night allows the gums to breathe and decreases the collection of bacteria that causes infections. Even people with dentures/partials can get mouth infections (for example candida or thrush), especially people with diabetes and those who use inhalers. If you get an infection, it is necessary to treat both mouth and dentures/partials.

Domain: Oral Health Self-Management; Belief in ability to perform behavior/Intention

Talking Points

I would like to talk with you about your beliefs about some oral health behaviors. In the survey you said that you didn't think it would be possible for you to perform certain behaviors such as visiting the dentist, brushing, flossing or taking care of your dentures/partials. Could you tell me why you don't think you can perform these behaviors?

- Even though you think you cannot prevent dental diseases, everyone can have good oral health if they take care of their teeth and mouths. This includes brushing and cleaning between your teeth and visiting the dentist once a year for a dental exam. It is also important to clean areas where there are gaps between teeth. People with dentures/partials, or those with diabetes or that use inhalers, are more at risk for getting infections (for example candida or thrush). If that happens, your dentist will have to treat both your mouth and your dentures/partials, if you have them.
- Many medications may cause symptoms of dry mouth. Common medications that have this effect are those often used for depression and high blood pressure, but hundreds of medications can have this side effect. They can affect the mouth spit you make, your sense of taste, and how your gums and mouth feel. If your mouth is dry you are at more risk for getting cavities. Ask your doctor, dentist or pharmacist about possible side effects of medications that you take.
- Dentures and partials are made of plastic and taking them out at night allows the gums to breathe and decreases the collection of bacteria that causes infections. Even people with dentures/partials can get mouth infections, especially people with diabetes and those who use inhalers. If you get an infection, it is necessary to treat both mouth and dentures/partials.

Domain: Perceived oral health risk

Talking Points

I would like to talk with you about your beliefs about your risk of oral diseases. In the survey you said it was likely that you would get (mention all that apply) cavities, cancer, gum disease or a toothache. Why do you believe that you are at risk for these problems?

- Bacteria in your mouth form plaque, and when it's not cleaned away with proper tooth brushing, it leads to the development of cavities, a frequent cause of tooth loss. Eating foods that contain a lot of starches and sugars can add to the development of cavities. Another cause of tooth loss is gum disease, and the older you are the more likely you are to have gum disease. Gingivitis is an inflammation of the gums and is the beginning of a more serious infection called periodontitis. This infection shrinks the jawbone and causes the teeth to loosen. [For male participants] And men are more likely than women to have worse gum disease. The good news is that problems like cavities and gum disease can be prevented with good oral health care. This includes brushing your teeth at least twice a day especially before you go to sleep, cleaning between your teeth at least once a day, brushing your tongue and palate, and using mouthwash that doesn't contain alcohol. These are good habits to develop and ones that I can help you to do well.
- People with dentures/partials or those with diabetes or breathing problems that require using an inhaler are at greater risk for developing infections in their mouth, also called thrush or candida. If that happens, it is necessary to see a dentist who can treat your mouth and dentures/partials, if you have them, to cure this infection. Taking your dentures/partials out and cleaning and soaking them overnight will allow your gums to breathe and decreases the chances of bacteria building up and causing infections.
- Oral cancer is a very serious oral health disease and is more frequently diagnosed in older adults. Oral cancer rates are higher for men than women. Eating fruits and vegetables can help prevent oral cancer. The use of tobacco and alcohol puts you at greater risk. In addition to visiting the dentist at least once a year so that he or she can check for oral cancer, it is important that you check your mouth for lumps, bumps and sores, which are possible symptoms of cancer, and report these to a dentist. I will show you how to do that and then you can practice it.

Domain: Oral Health Knowledge

Talking Points (must check with survey to see which points they have checked)

- I would like to talk about what causes dental diseases. In the survey you answered some questions incorrectly about causes of dental problems. Let's review some information about oral health, such as what causes cavities and gum disease as well as what fluoride is used for and how to take care of dentures if you have them.
 - **A, B,D,G** Cavities and gum disease are caused by different types of bacteria and the body's reaction to that infection. The bacteria that are in the plaque on your teeth use sugar and starch in the foods you eat and drink to make an acid that causes a cavity to form. Gum disease is caused by different bacteria in plaque. If plaque remains on your teeth too long, your gums become red and puffy and may bleed. This is called gingivitis. If plaque continues to stay on the teeth, the gums can become infected causing periodontitis. Periodontitis can cause teeth to loosen. The older you are the more likely it is you will have problems with your gums. Good oral hygiene goes a long way toward keeping your mouth healthy by reducing the amount of bacteria in your mouth and helping to prevent cavities and gum problems. If you already have advanced gum disease or cavities you cannot reverse them with brushing and flossing alone. You will need treatment by a dentist or dental team. But you do need to maintain good oral health at home to prevent more disease from occurring or from worsening the disease that you have.
 - **C and E.** Fluoride in the water and toothpaste helps protect the teeth from cavities. It helps the teeth stay strong and helps protect against the acid in the plaque. It does not disinfect the water.
 - **F.** Dentures and partials should be removed, cleaned and soaked in water or denture tablet solution overnight. By taking the dentures/partial out you are allowing the gums to rest. Dentures/partial are made out of plastic material that does not allow the gums to "breathe". If you wear them all the time you are more likely to get irritations under the gums or get fungal infections under the denture or partial. Some people are very used to wearing dentures/partial all the time. If you feel you can't sleep without your dentures or partial in, consider taking them out for a few hours a day to let the gums rest.
 - **H.** Oral cancer is not contagious. It is not spread like other infections. You are more likely to develop oral cancer if currently use or have used tobacco products such as cigarettes or chewing tobacco in the past. If you drink alcohol as well this will increase your risk even more. Ill-fitting dentures or partials that cause lots of irritations can cause pain and there is some concern that it may contribute to cancer risk. Men are more likely to get oral cancer than women. The areas to be most aware of are the bottom of your mouth and the sides of your tongue and under your tongue. Taking a look in your mouth every day when you clean your teeth or your dentures takes only a few seconds and lets you become familiar with what your mouth looks like. You can then see when something may start to look different. If you see a white or red patch in your mouth that is new you should see a dentist. Some things we think are not normal turn out to be fine, but it's better to have it checked. Untreated oral cancer is often fatal, but when found early is often treatable.

Domain: Self- Management Fears/Worries

Talking Points

From your survey I see that you have concerns about...

- **Brushing your teeth or brushing them properly to get them as clean as possible:** It is important to brush your teeth at least twice a day and especially before you go to sleep. Brushing your teeth with baking soda is acceptable but it is best to use toothpaste that contains fluoride and carries the American Dental Association (ADA) seal. The best way to brush your teeth is to hold your brush at an angle and brush in circular motions. Change your toothbrush every 3 months, or sooner if you get sick, for example with the flu. For someone who has trouble holding a toothbrush, for example someone with arthritis, a toothbrush with a big handle, or putting a piece of rubber tubing over the handle of a toothbrush often makes it easier to handle, and easier to clean your teeth well.
- **Cleaning your dentures/partials:** It's important to keep your dentures/partials clean because plaque can form on them, just like it can on natural teeth. There are special denture brushes, pastes and tablets to clean your dentures/partials, and you can also use soap and water. We will look at these and I will show you the best way to keep your dentures/partials clean. This includes putting a towel in the bottom of the sink when you clean your dentures/partials so that if they accidentally fall in the sink, they won't break. We recommend that you take your dentures/partials out at night, soak them in water, and let your gums breathe. This decreases the chance of bacteria forming and causing infections.
- **Cleaning your tongue:** Brushing or cleaning your tongue with your toothbrush is an important part of good oral care and prevention of oral diseases. It removes bacteria and keeps your breath fresher.
- **Dry mouth:** Dry mouth is a side effect of many medications that people take. Talk to your doctor, dentist or pharmacist about your medications. If your mouth is dry, you are more at risk for getting cavities [for those with natural teeth]. Don't use mouthwash that contains alcohol. The alcohol makes your mouth feel fresh but it can cause dry mouth or make your dry mouth feel worse.
- **Flossing or cleaning between your teeth:** Cleaning between your teeth with dental floss, toothpicks or special tools is an important part of having good oral health and preventing tooth and gum problems. The areas between your teeth are where food collects and your toothbrush can't reach, allowing bacteria to build up and cause cavities. Move the floss in a rocking motion between your teeth. I have a short video that we will watch and it will show you the proper way to floss. If flossing is difficult for you, there is a tool that looks like a small stick with the floss attached, and it may make it easier for you to clean between your teeth.
- **Painful or sensitive teeth:** Painful or sensitive teeth may be because your gums have receded leaving part of the root of the tooth exposed to heat and cold or because you have lost some of the surface of your teeth over time; or because you may have a cracked or lost filling. If your teeth are sensitive, you can use toothpaste for sensitive teeth, be careful about how you brush so you don't wear out the tooth surface (called dentine) and have your teeth checked regularly. It is easier to get cavities at the base of your teeth if some of the gum has receded so it's important to brush properly and to see a dentist to have your teeth checked regularly.
- **Painful or bleeding gums:** If your gums are painful or bleeding it is because they are irritated by plaque and by calcium deposits that are created over time by plaque and that irritate the gums. You may have gingivitis that is easily prevented or addressed by brushing and flossing properly. If you have calcium deposits on your teeth because of not flossing and brushing for a long time, a dental hygienist will have to remove these to help your problem. You may have periodontal disease which requires seeing a dentist.

- **Problems with your teeth that keep you from eating healthy foods:** Crooked teeth may bother a person because they affect how well a person can bite. A dentist may recommend braces to straighten the teeth, but this is more difficult for adults than children. To close gaps between teeth, a dentist may recommend something called a veneer, something that is put over the teeth to close the gap. Having missing teeth also may prevent you from eating healthy foods. A dentist can replace missing teeth with fixed bridges or removable dentures/partials that will improve your ability to chew foods. Having poor fitting dentures/partials can prevent you from eating healthy foods. A dentist can adjust your dentures/partials so that they are more comfortable when eating. Having pain in your teeth from cavities, gum disease or sores in your mouth may affect your appetite or ability to eat. A dentist can treat your oral health problems and help reduce pain so you can eat well.
- **Problems with your teeth that keep you from enjoying socializing with friends:** Some people are concerned that their teeth are not white enough. There are tooth whiteners that you can buy over the counter. The whitening strips only whiten in the front of the mouth. Dentists can apply whitening treatments but they are expensive and are not covered by dental insurance. Crooked teeth sometimes bother a person because they don't look nice. A dentist may recommend braces to straighten the teeth. Some people think they can treat bad breath with mouthwash. Most mouthwashes just cover up and don't treat the source of the bad breath. Some mouthwashes can be helpful though. **A good mouthwash should not have alcohol but it should have fluoride. This type of mouthwash will help your teeth stay strong and prevent cavities.**

Domain: Dry mouth

Talking Points

In the survey you answered some questions about dry mouth. You mentioned that you might feel like your mouth was dry at night or in the morning and that you need to sip some liquids when you are eating. Can you tell me more about the dryness you feel in your mouth? Do you notice your mouth feeling dry? Do you need to do anything to make your mouth feel less dry? Like suck on hard candies or mints to help you mouth feel less dry. Or drink water during the night or when you are eating so you can swallow your food.

- Dry mouth is the feeling that there is not enough saliva or spit in your mouth. Everyone has a dry mouth once in a while—if they are nervous, upset or under stress. If you have dry mouth often it can be uncomfortable and can lead to oral health problems. It is common as we get older to have to take medicine for different diseases or ailments. Some side effects of many of these medicines can cause dry mouth.
- Dry mouth can cause difficulties in tasting, chewing, swallowing, and speaking and can increase your chance of getting cavities, gum disease or problems wearing your dentures or partials if you have them.
- Saliva does more than keep the mouth wet. It helps digest food, it protects teeth from cavities and it prevents infection by controlling bacteria and fungi in the mouth. It helps you to chew and swallow and even taste your food.
- People get dry mouth when the glands in the mouth that make saliva are not working properly or they are taking medicines that cause their mouth to get dry. Many medications may cause symptoms of dry mouth. More than 400 medicines can cause the salivary glands that make the spit to make less saliva. For example, common medicines for high blood pressure and depression often cause dry mouth but hundreds of medications can have this side effect. They can affect the mouth spit you make, your sense of taste, and how your gums and mouth feel. Because of this, there might not be enough saliva to keep your mouth wet. .Ask your doctor, dentist or pharmacist about possible side effects of medications that you take. Some medical facilities also have a computerized resources that allow patients to access information about their medications
- Disease. Some diseases affect the salivary glands. Sjögren's syndrome, HIV/AIDS, and diabetes can all cause dry mouth.
- What can be done about dry mouth?
 - If your dry mouth is caused by medicine, your physician might change your medicine or adjust the dosage. It's important for you to ask the doctor as not all physicians will ask about this even though it is common.
 - Sip water or sugarless drinks often. If you have heart problems or high blood pressure you should ask you physician first before you drink a lot of fluid. Avoid drinks with caffeine, such as coffee, tea, and some sodas. Caffeine can dry out the mouth. Sip water or a sugarless drink during meals. This will make chewing and swallowing easier. It may also improve the taste of food. Chew sugarless gum or suck on sugarless hard candy to stimulate saliva flow; citrus, cinnamon or mint-flavored candies are good choices. Don't use tobacco or alcohol. They dry out the mouth.

- Be aware that spicy or salty foods may cause pain in a dry mouth.
- Use a humidifier at night especially in the dry winter months.

- Tips for keeping your teeth healthy:

- Remember, if you have dry mouth, you need to be extra careful to keep your teeth healthy. Make sure you:
 - Gently brush your teeth at least twice a day. Floss your teeth every day.
 - Use toothpaste with fluoride in it. Most tooth pastes sold at grocery and drug stores have fluoride in them.
 - Avoid sticky, sugary foods. If you do eat them, brush immediately afterwards.
 - Visit your dentist for check-ups.

Domain: Clinical Assessment

Cut-off: Compare clinical exam to self-assessment (5.1)

Talking Points

- In the survey you rated your oral health as good or excellent, yet the dental exam found that (fill in from exam- for example - you had some problems with your gums), or you had plaque on some of your teeth). Could you tell me how you decided how to rate your oral health? What do you think is good oral health?
- One way to think of good oral health is that it is when your teeth are clean front and back and in between, your gums are pink and do not bleed or hurt, your mouth is free of sores, and you are comfortable chewing, and socializing with friends without fear of the appearance of your teeth or offensive breath. Today we are going to talk about how to maintain good oral health and what you specifically can do to be sure that your oral health is as good as possible.