

Dental and Oral Health Concerns

Root Caries (Root Cavities)



Root cavities develop at the gum line and are caused by factors such as improper brushing of the teeth, receding gums that expose the root surfaces of the teeth, and a diet high in sugar. Older adults have an increased risk of developing root cavities, especially if there are physical or cognitive limitations that make regular tooth brushing a challenge. Other factors contributing to root cavities later in life are gum disease, generalized poor health, systemic diseases, and medications which dry the mouth.

Daily Dental Care Tips

For Natural Teeth:

- Brush teeth twice a day.
- Floss teeth once a day. If flossing is difficult, a rubber tipped stimulator, special toothpicks, or a small pointed toothbrush may replace flossing.
- Clean cheeks, tongue and roof of the mouth with a soft toothbrush at least once a day.
- If there are physical or cognitive barriers, an individual may need a caregiver to assist with daily care.

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Visits to the Dental Professional:

- A dental health professional should repair the teeth and provide additional information for daily home care.
- More frequent professional dental visits may be required.
- Additional rinses or topical medications may be prescribed by the dental professional.

Partial Denture Care:

- The combination of a loose fitting partial denture and poor oral hygiene can sometimes worsen root caries. Ensure natural teeth and dentures are cleaned well daily and dentures fit properly.
- Regularly monitor the dentures for fit. Partial dentures that are loose can prevent proper chewing and could accidentally be swallowed.

Did you know?

Oral cancer is found in 2-3% of the Canadian population. A dentist or physician should check the mouth annually for cancer.

For more information about dental health, please call

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