

# Dental Risk Assessment



Dental disease is a growing concern. Luckily, it can be prevented and treated with a variety of methods. Take our quiz to find out if you are at risk for dental disease.



**Do you brush your teeth at least twice a day?**

Brushing your teeth twice a day will get rid of plaque and prevent gingivitis.

Yes

No



**Do your gums bleed when brushing or flossing?**

Gums that bleed easily, as well as swollen and receded gums, can be a sign of periodontal (gum) disease.

Yes

No



**Do you eat or drink sugary substances often?**

Your diet has a major effect on your teeth.

Yes

No



**Have you previously had any cavities?**

If you have had cavities in the past, this can be an indicator of future dental disease.

Yes

No



**Are you diabetic?**

Periodontal disease is often linked to diabetes. Diabetes reduces the body's resistance to infection so the gums are among the tissues likely to be affected.

Yes

No



**Do you smoke cigarettes, cigars, or chew tobacco regularly?**

Smoking increases the risk of periodontal disease among adults.

Yes

No



**Do you frequently give your child bottles of sweetened liquids such as milk, formula and fruit juice?**

Giving your child bottles of sweetened liquids frequently can put the child at risk of Early Childhood Tooth Decay.

Yes

No



**Do your children currently have sealants on their back teeth?**

A sealant is a plastic material that is applied to the biting surfaces of the back teeth. It acts as a barrier to protect the teeth from plaque and acids.

Yes

No



**Does your community water supply contain fluoride?**

Fluoride is important for our teeth because it helps prevent tooth decay in both children and adults. It acts as a barrier to protect the teeth from plaque and acids.

Yes

No

*Dental information courtesy of the American Dental Association (ADA)*



### **Do you brush your teeth at least twice a day?**

If no: If you don't brush your teeth, you increase your risk of developing tooth decay and periodontal (gum) disease. When you don't brush, sugars and starches from foods are left on the teeth, causing the destruction of tooth enamel. You can prevent tooth decay and gum disease simply by brushing twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste, flossing daily, maintaining regular dental checkups, and eating nutritious and balanced meals.



### **Do your gums bleed when brushing or flossing?**

If yes: Periodontal disease is an infection of the tissues that support your teeth. Fortunately, it is reversible in its beginning stage, but it can lead to tooth loss if not taken care of early on. Some factors that increase the risk of periodontal disease are smoking, diabetes, some types of medications and crooked teeth. If you experience any of these factors or symptoms of gum disease, contact your dentist today.



### **Do you eat or drink sugary substances often?**

If yes: Eating or drinking sugary substances such as candy, soda and sweetened fruit drinks can put you at a greater risk for tooth decay if you frequently consume them without brushing immediately afterwards. The longer sugar stays in your mouth, the greater your risk of decay. By limiting your sugar intake, brushing twice a day and maintaining a healthy diet, you can reduce your risk of tooth decay.



### **Have you previously had any cavities?**

If yes: Talk to your dentist about establishing a preventive routine to keep your teeth healthy. Older adults with cavities may also be at risk for decay around the edges of fillings. Over the years, fillings may weaken and become susceptible to fracturing and leaking around the edges, leaving bacteria to accumulate in the crevices and cause decay.



### **Are you diabetic?**

If yes: Patients with inadequate blood sugar control seem to develop periodontal disease more often and more severely, causing a greater loss of teeth. When patients don't control their diabetes properly, high glucose levels in saliva help bacteria thrive. By brushing twice a day and flossing daily, you can remove plaque and help keep your teeth healthy.



### **Do you smoke cigarettes, cigars, or chew tobacco regularly?**

If yes: Tobacco contains a variety of toxins associated with cancer. It can cause oral cancer, periodontal (gum) disease, bad breath, stained teeth, a diminished sense of taste and smell, and delayed healing. Tobacco damages your gum tissue by harming the attachment of bone and soft tissue to your teeth. Chewing tobacco puts you at risk for cancers of the mouth, lip, tongue and pancreas. Cigars are not a safe alternative to cigarettes because they still put you at risk for oral and throat cancers.



### **Do you frequently give your child bottles of sweetened liquids such as milk, formula and fruit juice?**

If yes: When these liquids are left to cling to the child's teeth for long periods of time, they produce acids that attack the child's teeth, causing decay. Children's baby teeth are important and you can prevent Baby Bottle Tooth Decay in a number of ways: avoid filling your child's bottle with liquids such as sugar water and soft drinks, never put your baby to bed with a bottle containing milk or juice, and begin making regular dental visits by the child's first birthday.



### **Do your children currently have sealants on their back teeth?**

If no: Sealants are easy for your dentist to apply. They are more typically applied to children and teenagers because of their greater risk of decay, but adults can benefit from sealants as well.



### **Does your community water supply contain fluoride?**

If no: It is effective not only in preventing tooth decay, but in reversing early signs of tooth decay as well. Fluoride is naturally present in all water sources and many communities adjust the fluoride content of their water to maintain the recommended level for optimal dental health. Water fluoridation is an effective and inexpensive means of obtaining the fluoride necessary for optimal tooth decay prevention. Individuals who do not live in a fluoridated community should talk to their dentist about other fluoride supplements.

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