



Seniors — Keep Your Smile Healthy

Oral health has greatly improved for American adults age 65 and older over the past 50 years. Today, the average senior has 19 natural teeth, compared to just seven in 1960.¹

You can keep your smile healthy with these oral health tips:

- **Maintain good oral health habits.** Brushing for two minutes twice a day, flossing once daily and visiting the dentist regularly are all crucial to maintaining good oral health.
- **Fight dry mouth.** Certain medications and medical conditions can reduce saliva and lead to dry mouth. The anti-bacterial properties in saliva help protect against tooth decay and cavities. To help alleviate dry mouth, drink more water, chew sugar-free gum or suck on sugar-free candy. Talk to your dentist for other options, including mouth rinses and artificial saliva.
- **Prevent gum disease.** Gum disease (periodontitis) is more prevalent in older adults. Symptoms of gum disease can include bleeding gums, tender or swollen gums, loose teeth and bad breath. Good daily oral health habits, like brushing and flossing, can help prevent gum disease.
- **Use fluoride toothpaste and mouthwash.** Gum disease can cause gums to recede, exposing the tooth root and making it more prone to decay. Fluoride and mouthwash protect teeth and can help prevent cavities from forming on the exposed root.
- **Avoid tobacco and excessive alcohol consumption.** Tobacco and alcohol use increases your risk for oral health problems, including gum disease and oral cancer. Quitting can help you greatly reduce your risk for developing these diseases.

Good oral hygiene along with regular dental visits can help keep your smile healthy for many years to come.

Visit [truassure.com](https://www.truassure.com) for more oral health resources and information.

¹The National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) and the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, 2014.