

Seniors

Oral Health for a Better Life: 10 Keys to Oral Health Later in Life

01. A complete daily routine
02. Preserve your teeth and act early
03. Oral health is an essential part of your overall health
04. Healthy gums: the foundation of a healthy mouth
05. A well-hydrated mouth
06. Protect your enamel and reduce wear
07. Chew well to eat better
08. Regular check-ups: early detection
09. Adapted routines support consistency
10. Caring for dentures and oral tissues to prevent infections



Oral Health for a Better Life:

10 Keys to Oral Health Later in Life

According to the United Nations' World Population Prospects 2024, by the mid-2030s there will be 265 million people aged 80 and over, —more than the number of babies under one year of age.¹ In light of this projection, oral health becomes even more important due to its close connection with overall health and well-being.

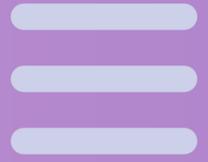
As we age, maintaining good oral health habits helps preserve our quality of life—allowing us to eat comfortably, communicate with confidence, and fully enjoy everyday activities. Adopting healthy habits early and attending regular check-ups make it easier to maintain a healthy mouth throughout life.

Small habits, maintained over time, make a big difference. Discover the 10 keys to oral health and well-being in later life.²

In a world where people are living longer, oral health is a key ally for well-being and quality of life.

And it starts early: simple, consistent habits, combined with regular check-ups, provide the best foundation for maintaining a healthy mouth throughout life.

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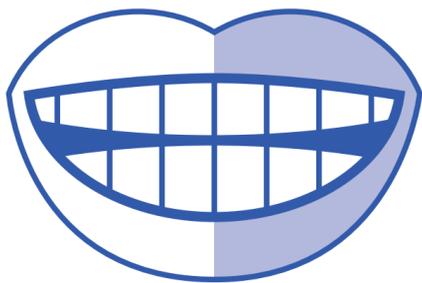
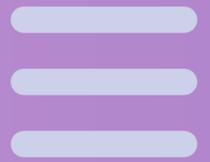


01. A complete daily routine

Advancing age can increase the likelihood of developing tooth decay or gum disease. Adopting proper brushing techniques—including interdental cleaning—combined with regular dental check-ups, professional cleanings, **oral healthcare** education, and dietary guidance can significantly improve oral health.

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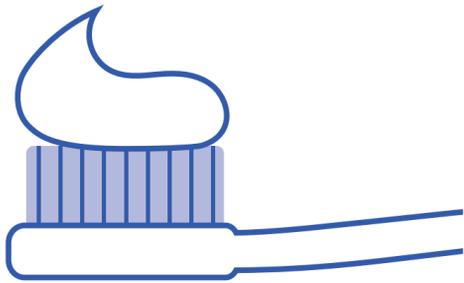
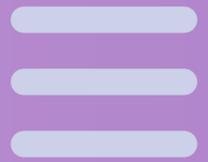


02. Preserve your teeth and act early

Twenty-three percent of people over the age of 60 have lost all their teeth—yet **this should not be considered a normal part of ageing**. Beyond its impact on speech and self-confidence, tooth loss is associated with a higher risk of systemic diseases, such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes, largely due to the chronic inflammation linked to periodontal disease. Preventive care, regular check-ups, and appropriate rehabilitation options—such as tooth-supported prostheses or implants—can help enhance well-being and overall quality of life.

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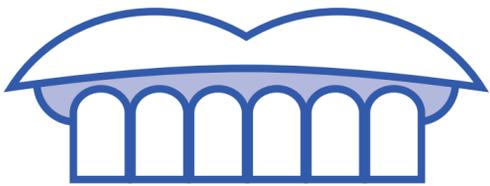
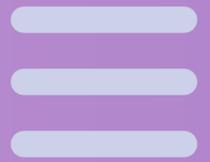


03. Oral health is an essential part of your overall health

Later in life, many people live with one or more chronic conditions and their associated treatments. Maintaining good **oral healthcare** habits—including regular dental check-ups, healthy lifestyle practices, and a balanced diet—helps protect the mouth and supports overall well-being.

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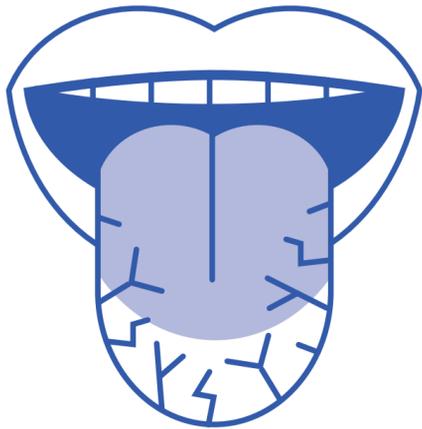
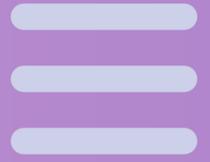


04. Healthy gums: the foundation of a healthy mouth

More than 60% of people over the age of 65 have some degree of periodontal disease, and the prevalence of severe periodontitis is highest among those aged 65 to 74. This condition can lead to tooth loss and infections and has been linked to systemic health problems. Periodontal disease is not simply a consequence of ageing; it is caused by the accumulation of dental biofilm. Removing biofilm daily through proper brushing, interdental cleaning, and regular dental visits helps prevent inflammation, bleeding, and tooth loss.

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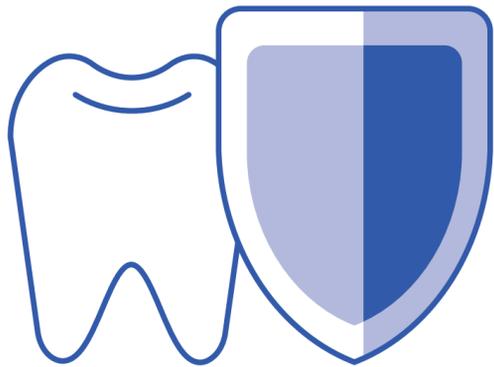
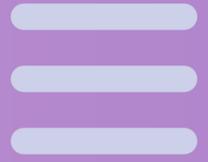


05. A well-hydrated mouth

Xerostomia, or dry mouth, affects roughly one third of older adults and can result from medications, systemic diseases, cancer treatments, or natural age-related changes. This condition increases the risk of cavities, gum disease, and difficulties with speaking or swallowing. Maintaining hydration, avoiding irritants such as alcohol, tobacco, and caffeine, and using products that stimulate saliva production and lubricate the oral cavity are essential for preventing complications.

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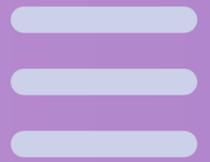


06. Protect your enamel and reduce wear

As we age, enamel becomes more vulnerable, raising the risk of sensitivity, cavities, and fractures. Habits, like teeth grinding (bruxism) or changes in the height of your bite (e.g., loss of vertical dimension), can make chewing more difficult and affect your quality of life. Preventing enamel wear involves managing habits like bruxism, ensuring dentures fit properly, and attending regular check-ups to detect and treat early signs of erosion.

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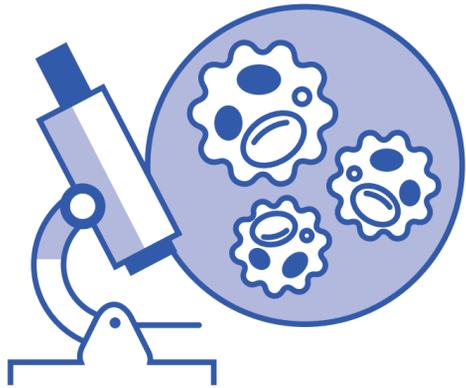
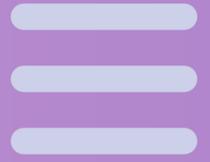


07. Chew well to eat better

After age 65, tooth loss, gum disease, and ill-fitting dentures can make chewing difficult, which may impact nutrition and overall well-being. Proper **oral healthcare**, timely treatments, and rehabilitation of chewing function with well-fitting dentures can significantly improve chewing efficiency and, in turn, quality of life.

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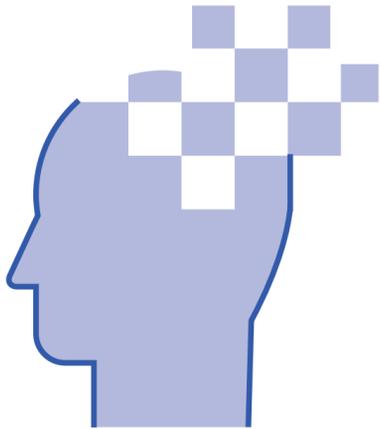
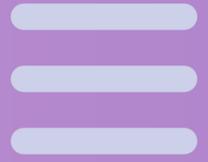


08. Regular check-ups: early detection

Oral cancer becomes more common with age, particularly in people over 65. Factors such as tobacco use, alcohol consumption, sun exposure, human papillomavirus (HPV), inadequate dental care, or poorly fitting dentures can increase the risk. **Regular oral examinations and screenings, when needed**, help detect any lesions early and prevent complications.

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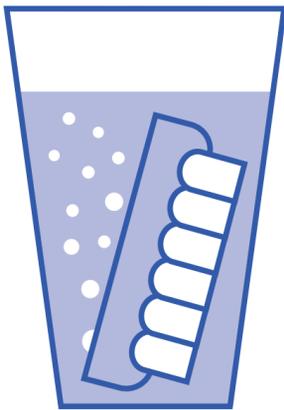
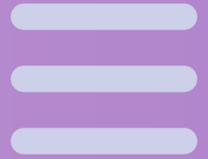


09. Adapted routines support consistency

Over time, changes in dexterity or vision can make maintaining proper oral care routines more challenging. **Adjusting tools and daily habits** to match each person's abilities helps maintain consistency, preserve oral health, and support overall well-being.

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10. Caring for dentures and oral tissues to prevent infections

Oral candidiasis is a common infection in older adults, mainly caused by the *Candida* fungus. Its prevalence increases with age due to factors such as a weakened immune system, reduced saliva flow, certain medications, and dentures that are poorly fitted or not properly cleaned. Maintaining proper oral and denture hygiene, staying well hydrated, and attending regular dental check-ups—which allow for denture adjustments and early detection of irritation or infection—are essential for prevention.

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