



The American Dental Hygienists' Association is promoting October 2011 as National Dental Hygiene Month. Visit their website <http://www.adha.org/ndhm/index.html> for tips from ADHA and their corporate sponsors.

The National Institutes of Health and the Ohio Department of Health are online sources for information about oral health.

How Much Fluoride is in My Water?

If you receive your tap water from a local water utility, you can find out its fluoride content. Using the data base from the Ohio Dept. of Health, Oral Health site, click on a county on the map to view information on the community water systems in that county. The number of persons served and the fluoride content of each system are provided. Currently, the optimum recommended level of fluoride in drinking water in Ohio to prevent tooth decay is 1.0 part per million (ppm) or 1.0 mg/L. Recently, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services proposed changing the optimum level of fluoride in drinking water to 0.7 ppm or 0.7 mg/L. More information is available about the [proposed recommendation](#). If you receive your tap water from a private well, a laboratory will need to analyze a sample of your water to determine the fluoride content. Click [here](#) to find out how to have your water tested for the fluoride content.

Oral health isn't optional. It is critical to our general health and well-being. Oral health enables us to eat properly, work productively, go to school ready to focus on learning, feel good about our appearance and enjoy life. The mouth is the gateway to the rest of the body, providing clues about overall health. It is sometimes the first place where signs and symptoms of other serious diseases are noticed.



It's simple.
Healthy habits for a healthy smile.
Ask your dental hygienist to find out more.



Unfortunately, oral health care is too often viewed by some as an "extra", sought or provided only after other health care considered more important is secured.

Among findings of recent surveys on the oral health of Ohio's children (under 18 years of age) and their access to dental care show:

- Dental disease remains a common problem among Ohio's children; 51 percent of children have experienced tooth decay by third grade.

- Dental care remains the single most common unmet health care need for nearly 157,400 children in Ohio, regardless of family income.

Almost 340,000 children in Ohio have never been to the dentist.

Nearly 1.2 million working age adults (18-64 years of age) report that they have dental needs that have not been met.

More than 3.9 million Ohio adults (45 percent) over 18 years of age have no dental insurance.

On average, three Ohioans are diagnosed with oral and pharyngeal cancer and one person dies from the disease every day.

While prevention is the foundation of good oral health, even the best prevention efforts cannot eliminate all disease and the need for accessible dental care.

Proven community-based measures to prevent tooth decay, such as community water fluoridation and schoolbased sealant programs, are vital to ensuring better oral health for Ohioans and are especially important for our most vulnerable residents.

The full report is at <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhPrograms/ohs/oral/oral1.aspx>

Child Dental Health

Healthy teeth are important to your child's overall health. From the time your child is born, there are things you can do to promote healthy teeth. For babies, you should clean teeth with a soft, clean cloth or baby's toothbrush. Avoid putting the baby to bed with a bottle and check teeth regularly for spots or stains.

For all children, you should

- ◆ Brush teeth with a fluoride toothpaste
- ◆ Provide healthy foods and limit sweet snacks and drinks
- ◆ Provide low-fat milk and dairy products high in calcium
- ◆ Schedule regular dental check-ups

Connect to MedlinePlus for more information about child dental care.

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/childdentalhealth.html>

Adults

Healthy teeth are clean and have no cavities. Healthy gums are pink and firm. To maintain healthy teeth and gums, follow these steps:

- ◆ Brush your teeth at least twice daily, preferably after every meal and at bedtime.
- ◆ Floss at least once per day.
- ◆ Schedule an appointment with a dentist for a routine cleaning and examination. Many dentists recommend having the teeth professionally cleaned every 6 months.

◆ Keep dentures & retainers clean
Connect to MedlinePlus for more information about adult dental care.

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/001957.htm>