



Tips for Toothbrushing

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Tooth decay is a problem for children, teens and to a lesser extent, adults. Plaque, a sticky film of bacteria, constantly forms on your **teeth**. When you eat or drink foods containing sugars, the bacteria in plaque produce acids that attack **tooth** enamel. Eventually, if the plaque is not removed following eating and drinking foods containing sugar, cavities may result that require dental fillings.



That is why it is so important for all of us to brush our teeth following every meal and most importantly, before bed. How we brush our teeth is also important. We should hold the brush, either manual or electric, with light pressure at a 45-degree angle and brush in short circular strokes making sure we brush all surfaced, inside and out and also the biting surfaces of our teeth. It is also important to brush our tongues to remove bacterial plaque that may cause bad breath.

Brushing our teeth for at least 2 minutes gives us enough time to brush all surfaces carefully, top and bottom. Using an egg timer or the timer on our phone is a good way to ensure that we are brushing long enough. Both children and adults should always use a toothbrush with soft bristles using only light pressure. Too much force or medium or hard bristles can damage our gums or abrade our teeth leading to sensitivity.

For children older than 2, brush their teeth with a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Be sure they spit out the toothpaste. (Ask your child's dentist or physician if you are considering using fluoride toothpaste before age 2.)

Until you're comfortable that your child can brush on his or her own, continue to brush your child's teeth twice a day with a child-size

toothbrush and a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.

Once your child can brush on their own without supervision, at around 9 years old, he/she should continue brushing twice a day, for two minutes each time. A good way to get him/her to do this is to either brush along with her or play a song or video that is two minutes in length as a fun timer.

Picking the right fluoride toothpaste for you or your child is also important. The easiest way to be sure that you have a good product that has been clinically tested is to look for the ADA seal of approval.

Here are a few simple tips that will ensure proper home care:

- Brush twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste.
- Clean between your teeth daily with floss or interdental cleaner.
- Eat nutritious and balanced meals and limit snacking.
- Check with your dentist about the use of supplemental fluoride, which strengthens your teeth, and about use of dental sealants (a plastic protective coating) applied to the chewing surfaces of the back teeth (where decay often starts) to protect them from decay.
- Visit your dentist regularly for professional cleanings and oral examination.

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Dental Care For Special Needs Members

Special needs members need regular dental care. A healthy mouth helps a person eat well, and avoid pain and tooth loss. Brushing and flossing every day and seeing the dentist regularly can make a big difference in the quality of life for a special needs member, and regular visits to the dentist are important. A 'get acquainted' visit with no treatment provided might help. The member can meet the dental office staff, sit in the dental chair if he or she wishes, and receive instructions on how to brush and floss. This type of visit can go a long way toward making future dental appointments go easier.

Parents and/or caretakers can also make dental appointments easier by being prepared. You may be asked to provide the special needs member's dental history and you should bring their complete medical history. This will assist the dentist in providing the best possible care in the safest environment.

Public Policy

The Plan welcomes Member participation on its Public Policy Committee, which meets quarterly at the Plan's corporate office in Orange, California. In order to be considered for membership, please write or call the Plan's member service department at 1-800-992-3366.

Language Assistance

Available

Many Western Dental enrollees speak a language other than English, or may prefer to speak another language when discussing their dental health or dental plan benefit matters. Currently Western Dental offers language assistance to our members. To arrange for this service, you or your dentist may call the Member Services department directly at **1-800-992-3366** to arrange for an interpreter to join the call. Please allow some time for connection to this service.

Face-to-face interpreters in languages other than English (including Sign Language) may be available in some circumstances. Vital Documents such as plan brochures, provider directories, important forms and letters about Western Dental services, language rights and certain outreach materials are currently produced in Spanish. For more information about Language Assistance, contact **1-800-992-3366**.



Inquiries and Complaints

Enrollees (members) are encouraged to contact Western Dental at 1-800-992-3366 regarding any concerns that they may have while obtaining services. Western Dental maintains a grievance process to address these concerns. Enrollee complaints or grievances can be made over the phone in person, at any Western Dental Provider Office, by obtaining a Western Dental Member Incident Form and submitting it to Western Dental, or by submitting the complaint using the Western Dental website at www.westerndental.com. Western Dental will send notification that the complaint has been received within five calendar days of receiving the complaint, and Western Dental will send a written response to the concerns within 30 days of receipt of the complaint.

The California Department of Managed Health Care is responsible for regulating health care service plans. If you have a grievance against your Health Plan, you should first telephone your Health Plan at 1-800-992-3366 and use your Health Plan's grievance process before contacting the Department. Utilizing this grievance procedure does not prohibit any

potential legal rights or remedies that may be available to you. If you need help with a grievance involving an emergency, a grievance that has not been satisfactorily resolved by your Health Plan, or a grievance that has remained unresolved for more than 30 days, you may call the Department for assistance. You may also be eligible for an Independent Medical Review (IMR). If you are eligible for IMR, the IMR process will provide an impartial review of medical decisions made by a Health Plan related to the medical necessity of a proposed service or treatment, coverage decisions for treatments that are experimental or investigational in nature and payment disputes for emergency or urgent medical services. The Department also has a toll-free telephone number (**1-888-HMO-2219**) and a TDD line (**1-877-688-9891**) for the hearing and speech impaired.

The Department's Internet Web site <http://www.hmohelp.ca.gov> has complaint forms, IMR application forms, and instructions online.

Not Sure Who Your Primary Care Dentist Is? Want to find a provider?

Every Western Dental member is assigned to a primary care dental office (a "PCD"). The PCD will provide for the general dental needs of its assigned members. If you do not know who your PCD is, or if you would like to change your PCD, you can contact Western Dental to request a provider directory or specific information regarding your PCD or other PCDs in your area. The information that Western Dental can provide includes location and contact information for the PCD as well as the PCD's professional degree, board certifications, whether or not the PCD is accepting new patients at this time, and any recognized subspecialty qualifications a specialist may have.

To search our provider directory online, please go to www.westerndentalbenefits.com. Using this tool, you can find providers in your area, and then contact Member Services by telephone at **1-800-992-3366**, to complete the change.

For assistance please contact Western Dental by telephone at **1-800-992-3366**, by email at MemberServices@westerndental.com, at our Western Dental website (www.westerndental.com) or by mail at Western Dental Benefits Division, 530 S. Main Street, Orange, CA 92868. We will be happy to help you select your PCD and begin your oral health care relationship.

Disclosure of Review Processes

Upon request, WDS' Member Service Department will send you a copy of the guidelines and criteria that are used to determine if a service is covered or not when a dentist or WDS provider sends requests to WDS for benefits and/or claims for payment to an enrollee, a dentist or a member of the general public. You may ask for this information by writing to Western Dental Services, Inc., P.O. Box 14227, Orange, CA 92863, or by calling WDS Member Services at 1-800-992-3366.