

## Tips for Brushing Your Teeth

- Brush **twice a day** with a small amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Use a toothbrush with a **small head**, which makes it easier to clean around the back teeth.
- **Angle the bristles** toward the gumline so they clean between the gums and teeth.
- Brush **gently back and forth** in short circular strokes.
- Brush **all sides** of each tooth.
- Brush the **tongue**.



## Resources

**Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Medical Provider Locator:**

<https://findhivcare.hrsa.gov>

**Get Tested. Find Services + PrEP**

<https://www.hiv.gov>

**State HIV/AIDS Hotline**

<https://hab.hrsa.gov/get-care/state-hiv-aids-hotlines>

**Tools for HRSA's Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program**

<https://targethiv.org>



For more information about the HRSA Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program: <https://hab.hrsa.gov/about-ryan-white-hiv-aids-program/about-ryanwhite-hiv-aids-program>

# Oral Health Tips for People Living with HIV

Oral health is linked to overall health and can impact physical, psychological, social and financial well-being.



**HRSA**  
Health Resources & Services Administration

## A Healthy Mouth is a Healthy You



### What is Oral Health?

Oral health is the health of your mouth, including your teeth, gums, throat, and the bones around the mouth. Oral health is important for people of all ages. A healthy mouth helps people enjoy their food, chew better, eat well, and avoid pain and tooth loss.

### Tips for a Healthy Mouth

- **See your dentist regularly** for check-ups and cleanings.
- **Brush your teeth.** Brushing is necessary for removing dental plaque, a sticky film of bacteria. Plaque buildup can cause tooth decay, gum disease, and bad breath.
- **Floss every day.** Flossing cleans plaque from the parts of your teeth that your toothbrush can't reach.
- **Take all your HIV medications on schedule** to protect your immune system and help prevent oral infections.
- **Don't smoke.** Your health care provider or dentist can help you quit.

## Your Mouth Reflects Your Overall Health

Oral conditions can be painful, annoying and can lead to other problems. Most oral problems are preventable and easily treated if found early.

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### DID YOU KNOW?

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People with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) are at special risk for oral health problems such as:

- chronic dry mouth
- bleeding gums
- loose teeth
- bone loss around the teeth
- cancer (Kaposi's sarcoma)
- oral warts
- canker sore/fever blisters
- thrush (Candida/yeast) and
- dental cavities



## Tips for talking to Your Dentist or Health Care Provider

- Ask about the best way to care for your mouth.
- Ask them to repeat anything you don't understand.
- Ask 'how' and 'why' questions.
- Tell the dentist or hygienist if you notice any unusual changes in the way your mouth looks or feels or if it's dry.
- Talk to your health care provider about developing an oral health plan.



## Don't Wait Until It Hurts

Good oral health is an important part of managing your HIV disease and your overall health. Make oral health care a regular part of taking care of yourself.

Remember, with the right treatment, your mouth can feel better. And that's an important step toward living well with HIV.