



A fact sheet for aged care residents

Looking after your oral health in residential aged care



Why oral health matters

Good oral health is an important part of your overall health. The health of your mouth and teeth can affect your wellbeing and quality of life.

Looking after your teeth and mouth every day is an important part of your daily routine. It can help to prevent and manage problems in your mouth.

Poor oral hygiene and dental problems such as tooth decay and gum disease can:

- cause pain
- interrupt your sleep
- affect your ability to eat, drink and speak
- affect how you feel about your appearance
- cause negative health effects.

How it's done

Daily care

To look after your oral hygiene every day you should:

- brush your teeth twice a day with a soft toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste
- clean dentures with soft soap and a soft denture brush
- remove your dentures from your mouth at night and ideally store them dry in a container with a lid (no water).

Getting assistance in your daily oral health care

If you need help to look after your oral hygiene, your aged care team will provide you with assistance. You can ask your care team for help.



Some ways they can help you include:

- prompting you to brush your teeth
- handing you your toothbrush and putting toothpaste on it
- helping you to brush your teeth
- cleaning your dentures
- helping to store your dentures overnight where you can reach them.



Further information

- [Know, Look, Act resident fact sheet](#)
- [Senior Smiles Program](#)
- Australian Dental Association's website teeth.org.au

Regular dental check-ups

You can choose who you have regular dental check-ups with. Let staff know your preference. It may be the dental practitioner that you saw before moving into aged care, an external dentist or one who visits your aged care facility.

Discomfort, pain or problems with your mouth or teeth

If you have any problems, discomfort or pain with your mouth or teeth, let your care team know straight away. They can help arrange an appointment with a dental practitioner as soon as possible.

For some common problems that can affect the mouth and teeth, refer to the [Know, Look, Act fact sheet](#). You can ask your care team to provide you with a copy.

If you are concerned about your oral health

If you have concerns about your oral health or the oral health care you are receiving:

- first, talk to your aged care provider
- speak with an aged care advocate at the Older Persons Advocacy Network on **1800 700 600** or visit opan.com.au, for support to raise your concerns
- phone the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission's Food, Nutrition and Dining Hotline on **1800 844 044** (free call), 9am – 5pm AEDT, Monday to Friday if you wish to speak with professionals about issues, ideas or concerns in relation to an enjoyable food, nutrition and dining experience in an aged care service. Alternatively, you can contact the Commission's general enquiries line on **1800 951 822** (free call).



Phone

1800 951 822



Web

agedcarequality.gov.au



Write

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission
GPO Box 9819, in your capital city