

# Tips for Great Oral Health

The **plaque bacteria** in our mouths are primarily responsible for causing cavities and gum disease

- Brushing and flossing every day is the best way to remove plaque bacteria and keep our mouths healthy



**Brush your teeth 2 times** per day with fluoride toothpaste

- Brush for **2 minutes** each time. Set a timer!
- Change your toothbrush every 3-4 months. An old or frayed toothbrush cannot remove plaque bacteria effectively
- Try an electric toothbrush with a built-in 2-minute timer
- Try a 3-sided toothbrush to brush all surfaces at once



**Floss your teeth 1 time** per day to remove the bacteria your toothbrush can't reach

- Floss picks or floss holders with a long handle can help you reach your back teeth better
- Instead of using string floss, try a water flosser
- Small interdental brushes or picks work great too



**Dry mouth** can seriously affect your oral health

- Cavities occur much more frequently in those with dry mouth
- If your mouth is often dry, there are some things you can do to help: drink plenty of water, use dry mouth products, chew sugar-free or xylitol-based gum or candies, talk to your doctor or dentist



**Frequently consuming sodas** and other sugary foods and drinks can cause cavities

- Do not snack throughout the day. Try to eat sweets or drink sodas in a single setting
- Even breads and pastas contain sugars that cause cavities
- Try not to let food accumulate around your teeth, it is good practice to rinse your mouth after snacks and meals



**Visit the dentist** at least once a year

- Having your teeth cleaned and checked 1-2 times a year is ideal
- There are mobile dentists and hygienists in the ACRC catchment area who can visit clients' homes and other settings for those who are having difficulty getting to the dental office
- Finding a dentist can be challenging, please reach out to your ACRC Service Coordinator if you are having difficulty finding a dentist who can meet your needs

