

Healthy Mouth, Healthy Brain

February 2026

Good oral health is an important part of healthy aging. Having a healthy mouth, including gums and teeth, can lower your risk for chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes, and it may lower your risk for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. Research shows a connection between gum disease and Alzheimer's disease, possibly due to bacteria moving from the mouth to the brain. The good news is that losing teeth as you age is avoidable. Taking steps to see a dentist regularly and maintain a healthy mouth can go a long way toward reducing your risk of dementia.

If you need help accessing or understanding this information, contact OralHealth@Vermont.gov.

Oral Hygiene



- Brush your teeth twice daily with fluoride toothpaste.
- Use a soft-bristled toothbrush with a small head to reach hard-to-reach places.
- Clean between teeth using floss, picks, or small-bristle brushes.
- If you have dentures, clean them with a denture cleanser (*not toothpaste*) after eating and soak them every night in a cleansing solution

Nutrition



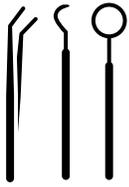
- Include foods rich in calcium, phosphorus, and vitamin C in your diet, all of which are important for good oral health.
- Limit sugary beverages and foods which promote tooth decay.
- Drink fluoridated tap water which helps prevent cavities.
- Avoid excessive consumption of caffeine beverages.



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802-863-7200

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Dental Care



- Dry mouth is a natural part of aging, but it can also be a common side effect of many medications. Saliva is important for a healthy mouth and without it, you can develop cavities. Ask your dental provider about using a mouth rinse or medication to treat dry mouth.
- Get treatment for your decayed, lost, or loose teeth. Talk to your dental health care provider to find out if new treatment options for treating cavities without needles or drilling (like silver diamine fluoride) may be right for you.
- Visit your dental provider regularly at least once a year to get an exam, including an oral cancer screening. Older adults are at a higher risk for mouth cancers.
- It's never too late to quit smoking or using tobacco products which elevate cancer risk. For help quitting call 802-QUITS or visit myhealthyvt.org

Additional Resources



For Information about how to obtain dental care in *your state*, see this link: [VDH Oral Health](#)

For More Information about *Oral Health and Brain Health*, see these resources:

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10994994/pdf/42414_2023_Article_256.pdf

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/custom-media/healthy-mouth-healthy-body/chronic-gum-disease-may-harm-brain-joints-and-gut/>

For more information about *Oral Health and Healthy Aging*, see these resources:

<https://www.aarp.org/health/conditions-treatments/info-2021/dental-health-tips.html>

<https://www.aarp.org/health/conditions-treatments/info-2021/dental-health-tips.html>

<https://www.astdd.org/docs/astdd-older-adult-oral-health-promotion-toolkit.pdf>