



Senior Care

LIBERTY cares about more than just teeth!

Oral Health for Seniors

A healthy mouth in our older years is a crucial quality-of-life concern.

Tooth decay, gum disease and the tooth loss that may result can affect our ability to eat, speak and laugh with ease. But tooth loss is by no means an inevitable part of aging; rather, it's a result of poor oral health - something you can actively prevent!

Maintaining oral health as we age comes with its own special challenges and may require help from grown children or home health aides. Arthritis, for example, can make holding a toothbrush or working floss around a tooth difficult. If you are having trouble keeping up with an effective daily oral hygiene routine, it's more important than ever that you see your dentist regularly for cleanings and exams. Your dentist will also screen you for oral cancer, and check whether removable dentures (if you wear them) need adjustment.

Another reason to see the dentist regularly is that age-related changes within the tooth structure can reduce pain perception, meaning that serious dental concerns can



go unnoticed. Therefore, don't rely on lack of pain as an indicator of good dental health.

Also, be aware that many medications taken by older Americans can dry out the mouth. This common side effect is more than just an annoyance: A chronically dry mouth can promote tooth decay. If you are experiencing a dry mouth, it's important to discuss this with your dentist.

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The following ailments are linked to poor oral health:



- **Heart Disease** - Those with gum disease are two-times more likely to have or develop

- **Strokes & Clots** - Those with gum disease have an increased susceptibility of having a stroke and, or, developing blood clots

- **Respiratory Disease** - Harmful Bacteria from the mouth can be an agent for pneumonia and bronchitis

- **Diabetes** - Gum disease disrupts the control of blood sugar

- **Kidney Disease** - Harmful bacteria from poor oral hygiene can weaken kidneys



Taking care of your mouth is one of the best ways to prevent a wide range of health problems.

Maintaining a clean and healthy mouth is critical to whole body health.