

# HealthyBy Choice

...One Day at a Time

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## National Dental Hygiene Month Daily Practices for Good Oral Health

The focus of National Dental Hygiene Month is on the key daily habits that promote healthy teeth and gums. These are:

1. **Brushing.** The ADHA recommends using a soft toothbrush to brush twice a day, once in the morning after breakfast and then again in the evening just before going to bed, using a toothpaste containing fluoride.
2. **Flossing.** This should be done once daily, optimally just before going to sleep, when trapped food particles can do the most damage.
3. **Eating healthy.** A diet in accordance with the government's food pyramid promotes oral health by cutting down on sugars and contributing to overall physical health and includes whole-grains and dairy products, vegetables, fruits, and nuts, with meat, fish, and sweets in moderation.
4. **Use an antimicrobial mouthwash.** This should be done with daily brushing.
5. **Chew sugar-free gum.** Research supported by the Wrigley Oral Healthcare Programs has shown that chewing sugar-free gum for 20 minutes after eating helps to clean debris from teeth, promotes saliva production which helps to control acid buildup, and adds necessary minerals to the enamel of the teeth.

Additionally, parents should check their children's teeth closely once per month looking for signs of decay or infection, including cavities and white spots on the gums. They should make sure their children see their dentist for a checkup regularly.

The ADHA also recommends that people remember to brush the flat chewing surfaces of their teeth because people tend to brush the front and back sides adequately but overlook the tops and that they should put in the extra effort required to floss their back teeth just as well as they do their front ones.

## The oral care benefits of chewing sugar-free gum:

A wealth of clinical evidence supports the oral health benefits of sugar-free gum, revealing how gum enhances production of saliva and helps with:

- Cleaning mouth of food debris and sugars
- Neutralizing acids
- Supporting remineralization

All of which can help to reduce the incidence of dental caries.



Healthy Smile...Healthy Life



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## BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

### Early Detection – Know What to Look For

According to the American Cancer Society, when breast cancer is detected early, and is in the localized stage, the 5-year relative survival rate is 99%. Early detection includes doing monthly breast self-exams, and scheduling regular clinical breast exams and mammograms.

#### A Change in How the Breast or Nipple Looks or Feels

- Nipple tenderness or a lump or thickening in or near the breast or underarm area
- A change in the skin texture or an enlargement of pores in the skin of the breast (some describe this as similar to an orange peel's texture)
- A lump in the breast (It's important to remember that all lumps should be investigated by a healthcare professional, but not all lumps are cancerous.)

#### A Change in the Breast or Nipple Appearance

- Any unexplained change in the size or shape of the breast
- Dimpling anywhere on the breast
- Unexplained swelling of the breast (especially if on one side only)
- Unexplained shrinkage of the breast (especially if on one side only)
- Recent asymmetry (unequal or lack of sameness) of the breasts. Although it is common for women to have one breast that is slightly larger than the other, if the onset of asymmetry is recent, it should be checked.
- Nipple that is turned slightly inward or inverted
- Skin of the breast, areola, or nipple that becomes scaly, red, or swollen or may have ridges or pitting resembling the skin of an orange



**5 STEPS TO DETECTING BREAST CANCER EARLY:**

1. Practice routine self-exams
2. Know your risks and family history
3. Visit your doctor regularly
4. Know when to get a mammogram
5. Follow-up after a screening or test



*Early detection is key!!*

