

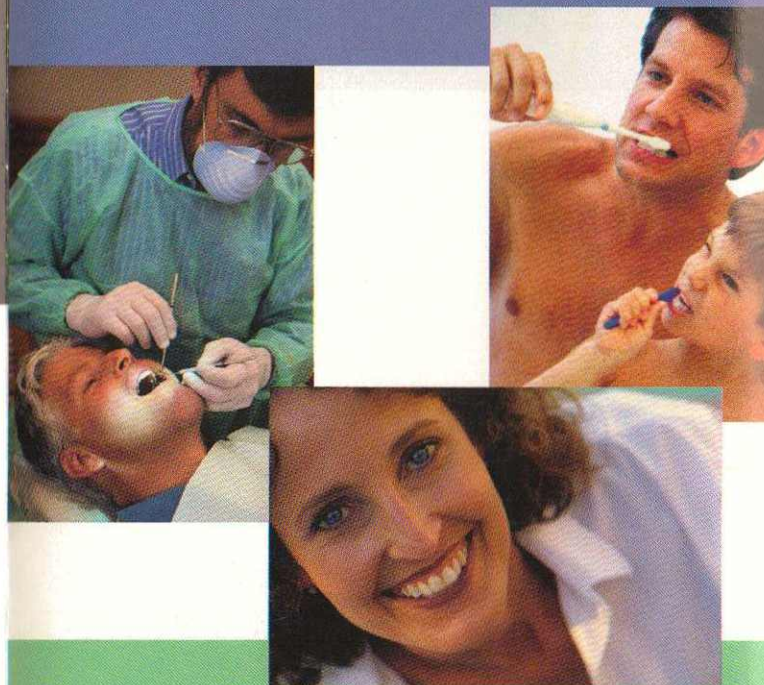
Why Your Smile Needs a Regular Professional Cleaning

Both tooth decay and gum disease can develop when a sticky film of bacteria, called plaque, is allowed to build up on the teeth. While brushing and flossing your teeth will help remove a great deal of plaque, its nearly impossible to remove all of it. In time, plaque can harden into tartar, or calculus, especially in hard-to-reach areas near the gumline and between teeth. Once plaque has hardened into calculus, the only way it can be removed is through professional teeth cleaning at the dental office.

During the cleaning, the dentist or hygienist will remove the hardened deposits with manual scalers or an ultrasonic machine. Loose particles are removed with a stream of water. After the hard deposits have been removed, the teeth may be polished with a mild compound. Professional cleaning also helps remove many of the food, beverage or tobacco stains that cannot be removed with regular brushing.

Oral Examinations and Your Health

Your dentist performs a dental exam to gather information about your oral health. The extent of the exam you'll receive depends on a number of factors, including whether you are a new or returning patient; the length of time since your last dental visit; and whether you are returning to have a specific dental condition checked.



Your Teeth

Checking for dental decay is an important part of an oral exam. Your dentist will check for signs of decay, including decay around old fillings and decay of exposed tooth roots. Detecting tooth decay early can save time, money and your teeth!

If you wear dentures, it's important for your dentist to periodically check them for proper fit and to look for oral lesions. Although they were made to fit precisely, dentures can become loose due to naturally occurring changes in your gums and bones.

Systemic Health

Oral health is integrally connected with your general health. Regular check-ups are important because some diseases or medical conditions have symptoms that can appear in the mouth. Diabetes, nutritional and vitamin deficiencies and hormonal irregularities are some examples.

Periodontal Disease

Recent research suggests there may be a link between periodontal (gum) disease and other health problems. Prevention of periodontal disease, then, is an important step in maintaining overall health. Periodontal disease affects three out of four adults at some time in their lives. It doesn't necessarily hurt and you may not even be aware that you have it until an advanced stage. Regular dental visits are essential for detecting periodontal disease at an early stage, when it can often be reversed, before the gums and the supporting bone are irreversibly damaged.

Cancer Screening

During a dental examination, your dentist can screen for precancerous changes in the oral tissues and thus help detect cancer at a stage when it can be more successfully treated. Your dentist checks your neck and oral tissues for lumps, masses, growths, red or white patches or recurring sore areas.

Changes in Your Health

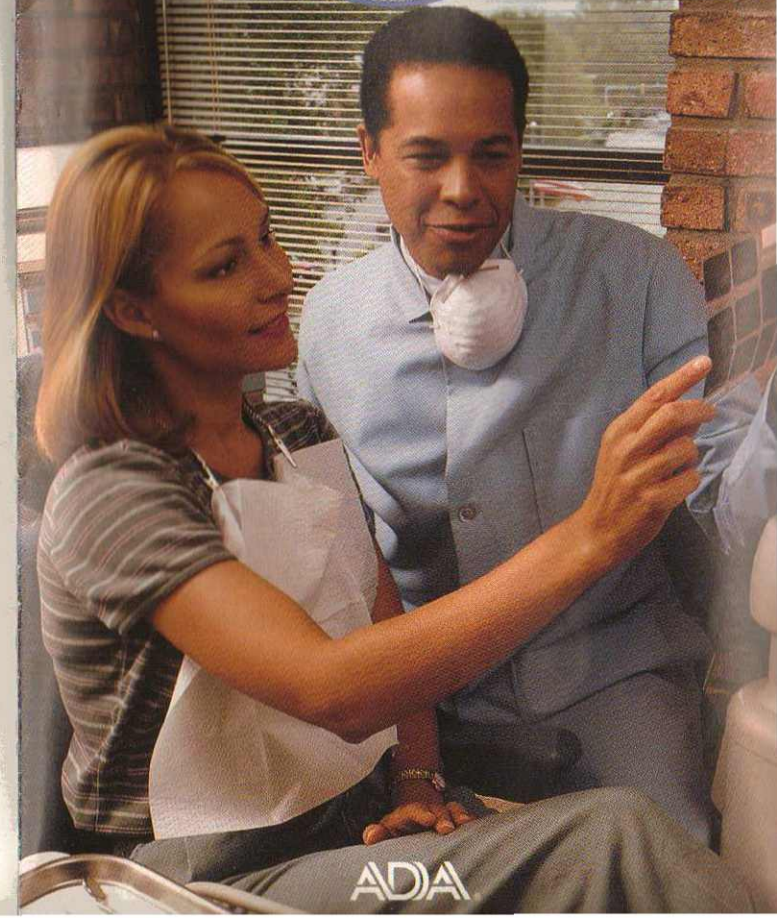
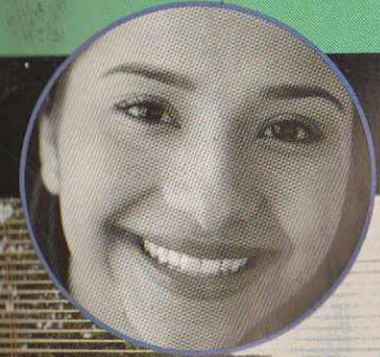
Be sure to let your dentist know if you have any illnesses or medical conditions and if your health status has changed since your last visit. Tell your dentist what medications you are taking – both prescription medications and over-the-counter products, including alternative medications. Also let your dentist know if you've had any problems with medications.

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The Benefits of Regular Dental Visits



A healthy, attractive smile can help you feel and look your best. By scheduling regular dental visits, you will gain important benefits for that smile! Professional teeth cleaning and oral exams are essential ingredients for maintaining good oral and general health.



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