My Teeth and Gums

An Easy Read Guide to looking after your teeth and gums

Choosing the right toothbrush

Healthy Eating

Visiting the dentist

Looking after false teeth

Brushing your teeth and gums

A guide for people with learning disabilities

Developed and Designed by the Clear Communication People Ltd in Partnership with NHS Surrey Special Care Dental Service
It is important to brush your teeth at least twice a day:

- In the morning after breakfast.
- At night before you go to bed.

Even if you have no teeth it is important to brush your gums. Brush them twice a day with a soft toothbrush and toothpaste.

Use a fluoride toothpaste when you brush your teeth. Dental floss and mouthwash can also help to keep your teeth and gums healthy.

Brush your teeth for at least 2 minutes each time. Your dentist can show you how to brush your teeth properly.
Choosing the right toothbrush

Your dentist can help you to choose the right toothbrush. It is best to ask them for advice.

Some people find electric toothbrushes easier to use.

There are lots of different special toothbrushes your dentist can suggest you use.

Some have special brushes

Some have special handles
Going to the Dental Surgery

It is important to visit your dentist surgery at least once a year for a check up.

Your dentist will tell you if you need to go more often.

The easyhealth website has a film about going to the dentist.

Go to: www.easyhealth.org.uk

Then click ‘D’ from the A-Z and choose ‘Dentist’.

Your dentist surgery can:

• Give your teeth a good clean
• Check if your teeth and gums are healthy
• Fix your teeth and do fillings
• Help with false teeth
• Tell you how to look after your teeth
To find a dentist in Surrey phone this number: 0845 271 2040

There are 4 Special Care Dentist Services in Surrey based in Redhill, Guildford, Woking and Epsom.

People with severe learning disabilities can get dental care from the Special Care Dentistry Service. Phone the number above for more information.

There are 3 dental access centres in Surrey for people who can’t get care from an NHS dentist.

The access centres mostly treat people just once, in an emergency.

To find out more go to the ‘Health Services in Surrey Made Easy’ section of: www.surreyhealthaction.org and see our factsheet about dental services in Surrey.
There are tools you can use to help remember when your next dental appointment is.

When I need to go to the dentist next reminder

This is a page set up in Microsoft Powerpoint. All the pictures you need to make a reminder are included.

You can type in the address and phone number of the surgery and use pictures to show when you need to book your next check up.

Easy Read appointment letter

This is an internet tool.

You can use this to create a picture letter that shows the person the time and exact date of their next appointment.

You just type in the information online and the letter is made for you. You can save and print the letter.

To find out more go to the ‘Health Services in Surrey Made Easy’ section of: www.surreyhealthaction.org
False teeth are also called dentures

If your false teeth are new it may take time for you to get used to them.

Eating

It will also take time to get used to eating with your false teeth.

Start by eating soft foods and build up to eating harder foods.

At Night

Take your false teeth out at night when you go to bed. This gives your gums a rest.

Keep your false teeth in a denture box when you are not using them.
Cleaning your false teeth

You should clean your false teeth every day

• Clean them with a toothbrush or a nail brush.

• Use soap and water or a denture toothpaste to clean them.

Clean your false teeth over a sink full of water

Then if you drop them they will land in the water and will not break.

Problems with your false teeth

If your mouth is sore don’t wear your false teeth for 1 or 2 hours and rinse your mouth out with salt water 3 times a day.

If the problem with your false teeth carries on go to see your dentist again.
Healthy Eating

To keep your teeth and gums healthy it is good to eat less sugar.

Some foods have sugar added to them.

Foods like biscuits, cakes, jams, puddings, sweets, chocolate and some cereals have added sugar.

Some drinks have sugar added to them.

Some juices, squash and fizzy drinks have added sugar. Choose ‘diet’ or ‘low sugar’ drinks.

It is also good not to have sugar in your tea and coffee.
Here are some snacks and drinks that have less sugar and are better for your teeth:

- nuts and seeds
- unsweetened popcorn
- milk
- fruit
- vegetables like carrots
- water
- dips like hummus

Try to eat and drink more of these kinds of things and less sugary snacks during the day.

For more Easy Read health information for people with learning disabilities in Surrey. Go to: www.surreyhealthaction.org

Designed by The Clear Communication People Ltd. Email: mike@communicationpeople.co.uk for more information. Easy Pics used with permission from The Clear Communication People Ltd

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