



## Why is teeth and mouth health important?

Martha eats healthy to help control her diabetes. Her diet consists of a lot of fruits and vegetables like apples and carrots. Recently, Martha has been feeling pain when she chews, making it hard for her to eat healthy foods. Martha made an appointment at the dental clinic and learned she has gum disease causing some teeth to be loose. After she has the teeth taken out, she was able to eat comfortably again and resume her healthy diet. Oral health is important to your overall wellness, physically and emotionally.

## What can you look for?

- Changes in the way your gums look and feel, especially watching for red or white sores
- Lumps or bumps in your mouth or around your face

Connections have been found between how well your body works and how clean your mouth is. You need a healthy mouth for good nutrition, and it helps with self-esteem and happiness. Luckily, most conditions in the mouth are preventable.

## Questions to ask yourself:

- When was the last time you had your teeth checked?
- Does your mouth hurt?
- Can you eat healthy foods comfortably?





## What can you do?

- Brush your teeth two times per day with fluoride toothpaste
- Clean between your teeth with floss or picks and use mouthwash daily
- Remove and clean dentures nightly
- Avoid snacking or drinking juice or soda between meals
- Limit eating sugary or sticky foods
- Visit your dentist two times per year
- Avoid tobacco use

## Where can you find support?

- **Dental** can assist with keeping your teeth and gums healthy and address any concerns you may have.
- **Tobacco Cessation** can provide support to quit tobacco use.

For more information, visit <https://www.southcentralfoundation.com/aging-well/>

## Alaska Native Health Campus Resources

### Anchorage

(907) 729-3300

### Matanuska-Susitna Borough

(907) 631-7880

Dental

(907) 729-2000

Tobacco Cessation

(907) 729-2689

