

DENTISTRY

THE IMPORTANCE OF ORAL HEALTH

ORAL hygiene includes brushing after each meal (teeth and tongue), the daily use of mouthwash and dental floss. Regular visits to the dentist (every six months) are important.

The absence of pain or discomfort is not a guarantee of healthy teeth. Teeth do not regenerate, therefore, early diagnosis of dental decay is vital.

The type of food one eats is also essential to oral health.

Cariogenic substances or substances that can damage and stain tooth enamel, such as tobacco, wine, coffee, chocolate and vitamin complex, are detrimental to dental health.

People with certain diseases may have more problems with their teeth and gums, as is the case with diabetics, for example, who should therefore increase the

care taken with oral hygiene and dental check-ups.

Similarly, young people and adults who practice sports, especially contact sports, should have their teeth checked more often, even if there are no visible signs of injury or trauma.

Caring for oral health in this period of life is crucial, in order to reduce the inevitable process associated with old age.

The elderly are particularly prone to undergo changes of the mouth including caries of the roots of the teeth as well as periodontal disease (gums), loss of teeth or worn teeth. Other changes associated with ageing are sensitive and thinning mucous membranes, tooth colour changes and decreased perception of certain flavours associated with the use of dentures,





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medication and alterations in the general health.

One of the degenerative processes associated with age are receding gums, causing root exposure and tooth hypersensitivity. Once again, only with regular check-ups is it possible to detect these disorders and to correct them at an early stage.

Apart from aesthetic, phonetic and functional changes (especially chewing), the loss of a tooth causes important changes in the mouth, particularly to the other teeth. The remaining teeth move into the "empty" spaces, causing an abnormal

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movement of the teeth and, subsequently, occlusion (bite) changes.

Replacement of lost teeth by removable or fixed dentures – implants – is imperative for general good health and quality of life.

The elderly should maintain the same oral hygiene as they did throughout adulthood, which also applies to dentures. Special care should be taken by people that wear dentures. Dentures should be kept clean and correctly adjusted.

Check-ups are essential as dentures need to be adjusted periodically to avoid blemishes, bad breath and inflamed gums.

It is never too late to adopt a lifestyle that promotes oral health.

The HPA Health Group is promoting oral health with "Programa Sorria +" – implemented in October 2014 – which not only provides dental check-ups but offers the possibility of arranging a treatment plan according to each individual's economic and personal needs.

OPHTHALMOLOGY

DR. MED.

ALEN SULZBACHER



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