

# A Healthy Mouth for a Healthy Life

Keeping your mouth healthy is a big part of caring for your overall health. If you don't know where to start, talk to your dentist. Most people should have a checkup every six months, but the dentist can tell you other steps you can take to keep your mouth healthy.

## Daily Tips for Improving Your Oral Health

- Brush your teeth with a fluoride toothpaste for at least two minutes at a time, twice a day.
- Be gentle! Plaque comes off with light pressure. Scrubbing too hard may hurt your teeth and gums.
- Brush the insides, outsides and tops (chewing surfaces) of your teeth.
- Brush your tongue to keep your breath smelling fresher.
- Floss at least once a day with about 18 inches of floss.
- Gently work the floss between each tooth.
- Curve the floss around each tooth and slide it between the tooth and the gum, rubbing gently.

## Call your dentist any time you notice:

- Sores, bleeding, redness or swelling in your mouth and gums
- Pain when chewing, bad odors or taste
- Pain in your teeth when you eat something cold, hot or sweet
- Holes or dark spots in your teeth
- Loose teeth

## Living a Healthy Lifestyle

- Avoid tobacco.
- Eat sugar and starches in moderation.
- Choose foods high in fiber like fruits and vegetables.
- Avoid sipping juices and sodas throughout the day.
- Drink water to wash away any acids created by sugar in your diet.

## Oral Health and:

### Pregnancy

Did you know that keeping your mouth healthy may help your delivery stay on schedule? Good oral health may help make sure your pregnancy goes to full term, keeping you and your baby healthy.

Source: Maternal and Child Health Journal, September 2006

### Rheumatoid Arthritis

Several studies have linked good oral health to a reduced risk for rheumatoid arthritis (RA). There may be a genetic link between RA and periodontitis, and having RA can make it harder to take care of your teeth.

Source: Arthritis Foundation ([arthritis.org](http://arthritis.org))

### Diabetes

If you have diabetes, a combination of higher blood sugar levels and "dry mouth" makes it difficult for your body to fight the bacteria that causes gum infections. Good oral hygiene can help keep your mouth healthy and your blood sugar stable, regulating your diabetes and making you healthier overall.

Sources: American Journal of Preventive Medicine, August 2014  
Journal of the American Dental Association, July 2013

### Cancer

Certain head and neck cancers are treated with radiation and chemotherapy, which cause dry mouth, making it harder for saliva to remove harmful bacteria.

## What to Tell Your Dentist

Let your dentist know if you have any of these conditions, and what kind of treatment you're getting. This will help your dentist decide how to care for you best.

BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee (BlueCross) complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. BlueCross does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

BlueCross:

- Provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as: (1) qualified interpreters and (2) written information in other formats, such as large print, audio and accessible electronic formats.
- Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as: (1) qualified interpreters and (2) written information in other languages.

If you need these services, contact a consumer advisor at the number on the back of your Member ID card or call 1-800-565-9140 (TTY: 1-800-848-0298 or 711).

If you believe that BlueCross has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex, you can file a grievance ("Nondiscrimination Grievance"). For help with preparing and submitting your Nondiscrimination Grievance, contact a consumer advisor at the number on the back of your Member ID card or call 1-800-565-9140 (TTY: 1-800-848-0298 or 711). They can provide you with the appropriate form to use in submitting a Nondiscrimination Grievance. You can file a Nondiscrimination Grievance in person or by mail, fax or email. Address your Nondiscrimination Grievance to: Nondiscrimination Compliance Coordinator; c/o Manager, Operations, Member Benefits Administration; 1 Cameron Hill Circle, Suite 0019, Chattanooga, TN 37402-0019; (423) 591-9208 (fax); Nondiscrimination\_OfficeGM@bcbst.com (email).

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Avenue SW., Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, DC 20201, 1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD). Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

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ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-800-565-9140 (TTY: 1-800-848-0298).

ملحوظة: إذا كنت تتحدث اذكر اللغة، فإن خدمات المساعدة اللغوية تتوافر لك بلامجان. اتصل برقم 1-800-565-9140 (رقم هاتف الصم والبكم: 1-800-848-0298).

注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-800-565-9140 (TTY:1-800-848-0298)。

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số 1-800-565-9140 (TTY:1-800-848-0298).

주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 1-800-565-9140 (TTY: 1-800-848-0298) 번으로 전화해 주십시오.

ATTENTION : Si vous parlez français, des services d'aide linguistique vous sont proposés gratuitement. Appelez le 1-800-565-9140 (ATS : 1-800-848-0298).

ໂປດຊາບ: ຖ້າ ວ່າ ງ ທ ຸ ງ ນ ດ ອ ັ ງ າ ພ າ ສ າ ລ າ ອ ກ າ ນ ບ ຸ ລ ັ ກ າ ນ ບ ຸ ລ ັ ອ ຍ ຕ ັ ອ ດ ັ ງ າ ນ ພ າ ສ າ, ໂດຍ ບ ສ ດ ື ອ ງ າ, ແມ ນ ນ ມ ບ ອ ມ ທ ັ ທ ັ ງ າ ນ. ໂທ ສ 1-800-565-9140 (TTY: 1-800-848-0298).

ማስታወሻ: የሚናገሩት ቋንቋ አማርኛ ከሆነ የትርጉም እርዳታ ድርጅቶች፣ በነጻ ሊያግዝዎት ተዘጋጅተዋል። ወደ ሚክተለው ቁጥር ይደውሉ 1-800-565-9140 (መስማት ለተሳናቸው: 1-800-848-0298).

ACHTUNG: Wenn Sie Deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen kostenlos sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zur Verfügung. Rufnummer: 1-800-565-9140 (TTY: 1-800-848-0298).

સુચના: જો તમે ગુજરાતી બોલતા હો, તો નિઃશુલ્ક ભાષા સહાય સેવાઓ તમારા માટે ઉપલબ્ધ છે. ફોન કરો 1-800-565-9140 (TTY:1-800-848-0298)

注意事項：日本語を話される場合、無料の言語支援をご利用いただけます。1-800-565-9140 (TTY:1-800-848-0298) まで、お電話にてご連絡ください。

PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad. Tumawag sa 1-800-565-9140 (TTY:1-800-848-0298).

ध्यान दें: यदि आप हिंदी बोलते हैं तो आपके लिए मुफ्त में भाषा सहायता सेवाएं उपलब्ध हैं। 1-800-565-9140 (TTY:1-800-848-0298) पर कॉल करें।

ВНИМАНИЕ: Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Звоните 1-800-565-9140 (телетайп: 1-800-848-0298).

توجه: اگر به زبان فارسی گفتگو می کنید، تسهیلات زبانی بصورت رایگان برای شما فراهم می باشد. با تماس بگیرد. 1-800-565-9140 (TTY:1-800-848-0298)

ATANSYON: Si w pale Kreyòl Ayisyen, gen sèvis èd pou lang ki disponib gratis pou ou. Rele 1-800-565-9140 (TTY: 1-800-848-0298).

UWAGA: Jeżeli mówisz po polsku, możesz skorzystać z bezpłatnej pomocy językowej. Zadzwoń pod numer 1-800-565-9140 (TTY: 1-800-848-0298).

ATENÇÃO: Se fala português, encontram-se disponíveis serviços linguísticos, grátis. Ligue para 1-800-565-9140 (TTY: 1-800-848-0298).

ATTENZIONE: In caso la lingua parlata sia l'italiano, sono disponibili servizi di assistenza linguistica gratuiti. Chiamare il numero 1-800-565-9140 (TTY: 1-800-848-0298).

Díí baa akó nínízin; Díí saad bee yáníłti'go Diné Bizaad, saad bee áká'ánída'áwo'déé, t'áá jiik'eh, éi ná hóló, koji' hódíilnih 1-800-565-9140 (TTY: 1-800-848-0298).