[IMAGE]

Healthy Teeth for a Healthier You

By Editorial Staff

People might not realize how important oral health is to our overall health and well-being. The truth is healthy teeth and gums are important in preventing other issues that may strike other areas of the body. Here are four critical oral health habits you and your family should develop, if you haven't already done so:

- A tube of tooth paste. - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark **Brush consistently**. It's important to use a soft-bristle brush and gently clean your teeth to avoid hurting your gums. Fluoride toothpaste can help to eliminate oral bacteria and frequent cleanings (if possible, right after a snack or meal) can prevent the buildup that leads to gum disease.
- Dental floss. - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark **Don't forget to floss**. Most people "forget" to floss, but it's one of the most important things we can do to keep our teeth healthy. Floss is the only thing that reaches below the gum line. When bacteria builds up in the pocket between the tooth and gum line, it can cause inflammation, tissue damage and bone loss. Even worse, it can spread to the bloodstream and the rest of the body.
- **Get your teeth cleaned two or more times a year**. When plaque forms below the gum line, it can harden into tartar which irritates and inflames your gums. At this point, even regular flossing can't get the job done. It's time to make a dentist appointment.
- A bottle of mouth wash. - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark **Try a little mouthwash**. Using an American Dental Association-approved mouth rinse can reduce the bacterial count in your mouth and help keep your breath fresh.

Too many people mistreat their teeth and ignore the warning signs of decay and disease until it's too late. A little prevention is worth a pound of cure - especially if the alternative is growing old without any teeth at all.

<u>A toothbrush. - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark</u>

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