Tooth Wisdom Throughout the Years

As the saying goes, with age comes wisdom. So as you grow older each year, keep in mind that living a healthy, active life is always possible when your oral and overall health is in check. Numerous studies have shown that oral health is related in more ways than one to overall health.[1] That's why it's not only important to take care of those teeth in your early years, but especially important as you grow older.

Teeth often require more attention as we age. Even though some studies show adults are keeping more of their natural permanent teeth as they grow older, tooth loss due to periodontal (gum) disease and tooth decay still remains an issue. In fact, about 23 percent of 65- to 74-year-olds have severe cases of gum disease.[2]

The risk and severity of gum disease increases with age primarily due to the onset of other health issues and medications taken later in life. More than 400 medications can cause dry mouth, limiting anti-bacterial properties in saliva that fight tooth decay. Other health problems like Alzheimer's disease can also lead to difficulty in personal care and hygiene.[2]

Good oral health habits and regular dental visits can help protect your teeth throughout the years.

Did you know?

Nearly one-third of adults 65 years and older have untreated tooth decay.[1]

Quick bites

Oral health care in the later years:

- Visit your dentist on a regular basis even if you have dentures.
- Drink fluoridated water and brush with fluoridated toothpaste twice each day.
- Don't forget to floss each day.
- Limit alcohol and avoid tobacco use to reduce your risk of oral health problems.
- Ask a family member or caregiver to help you stay on track with your daily oral hygiene.
- Talk to your dentist if you notice any changes or abnormalities in your oral health like dry mouth.

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Visit us online for more information on oral and overall health!

1. Mayo Clinic, "Oral Health, A Window to Your Overall Health," web.
2. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "Oral Health for Older Americans," web.

Healthy Smile, Happy Life

Delta Dental of Arkansas, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, and Tennessee

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