Step up your smile with safe dental solutions.

Learn more about healthy, approved treatments.

Viral dental trends that promise a brighter smile can be unreliable and unsafe. Skip them and opt for approved solutions performed by dentists who are committed to your oral and overall health and well-being.* When dental work isn't performed by a dental professional, how teeth look might be prioritized over dental health.

Teeth whitening

In-office treatments that are supervised by dentists and at-home kits prescribed by them can help ensure safe and controlled results.

Odontoplasty (enameloplasty)

This practice of reshaping teeth to fix chips, cracks or uneven edges should be performed by a dentist with precise tools and expertise.

Fillings

Cavities are drilled and filled by dentists to restore tooth health. Incorrectly filled cavities risk further damage and costly repairs.

Orthodontic evaluations

For gaps and alignment concerns, see an orthodontist for expert care.

Visit your dentist to keep your smile healthy and bright.

Get the smile you deserve with safe dental treatments. Skip potentially unsafe viral trends and seek trusted, professional care.

Schedule a check-up today. Find an in-network dentist at **myCigna.com**®.

*Mouthhealthy. "Do-it-yourself (DIY) Dentistry." American Dental Association. 2025. https://www.mouthhealthy.org/all-topics-a-z/diy-dentistry . Last accessed January 7, 2025.

All group dental plans and insurance policies have exclusions and limitations. For details about your covered services, review your plan documents. All Cigna Healthcare products and services are provided exclusively by or through operating subsidiaries of The Cigna Group.

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Good dental habits from the start.

Oral health for kids: What you need to know.

When it comes to building healthy dental habits in kids, it's important to start early and stay consistent – from the first dental visit to a stable at-home hygiene routine.

Infants

Did you know that dental care should start at birth? You can clean your baby's gums with a soft infant toothbrush or cloth and water. Later on, parents should use a tiny smear (grain of rice-sized) of fluoride toothpaste and a soft, age-appropriate sized toothbrush to brush baby teeth twice daily as soon as they erupt.[1]

A child's first dental visit should occur after the primary teeth have started to appear, and no later than 12 months of age.[1]

Children

As your child grows, there are a few ways to help prevent tooth decay, including limiting sugary snacks and beverages, and use of fluoride products and dental sealants. Your dentist can guide you on these topics and usage of appropriate products.

Fluoride is available through supplements, toothpastes, mouth rinses and community water fluoridation.

Dental sealants are a material placed in the grooves of the back teeth that help to "seal" out decay.[2] Sealants are generally prescribed for children and adolescents who may be at higher risk for tooth decay.

Adolescents

With adolescents, a big challenge is getting them to maintain proper oral hygiene at home, especially if they have braces. For smartphone-loving teens, download a fun app with a two-minute brush timer and push notifications to brush.

Soda and carbonated drink consumption increases the risk of tooth decay.[3] People who drink these beverages should rinse with water afterward to reduce the amount of sugar left in the mouth.

Does your teen like to chew gum? Chewing sugar-free gum may help reduce the risk of cavities when added to a regular home oral care routine of twice daily brushing and daily flossing.[4]

Schedule a check-up today

Regular dental cleanings with your dentist/dental hygienist are recommended to help keep your child's mouth healthy and catch any issues when they're small. Find a general dentist or pediatric dentist at **myCigna.com**.

All disclosures and sources appear at the end of this document.

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Don't worry. There are simple things you can do to help protect your children from cavities.

- Stop giving your baby a bottle by the time they are 12 months of age
- Visit the dentist and practice good oral health habits yourself
- Don't put your baby to bed or nap with a bottle containing anything except water
- Limit nighttime feedings (breast or bottle) after eruption of a child's first tooth
- Encourage drinking from a cup by age one
- Offer water, and limit juice by age one
- Provide a balanced diet by age one
- Brush your child's teeth twice a day as soon as they erupt
- Take your child to the dentist by age one and as often as your dentist recommends

1. American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. 2024. "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ): Toothpaste: when should we begin using it and how much should we use?" https://www.aapd.org/resources/parent/faq. Last accessed January 14, 2025.
2. NIH National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research. "Dental Sealants." December 2024. https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/health-info/sealants/. Last accessed January 14, 2025.
3. Feintuch, Stacey, et al. Healthline. "The 8 Worst Foods for Your Teeth." June 23, 2023. https://www.healthline.com/health/dental-and-oral-health/worst-foods-for-your-teeth. Last accessed January 14, 2025.
4. American Dental Association. "Chewing Gum." June 2023. https://www.ada.org/resources/research/science-and-research-institute/oral-health-topics/chewing-gum. Prepared by: Department of Scientific Information, Evidence Synthesis & Translation Research, ADA Science & Research Institute. Last accessed January 14, 2025.

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Building better habits

Alcohol, tobacco and oral health: What you should know

It's not just your liver and lungs that are compromised by alcohol and tobacco. Your mouth can also suffer. Here are simple ways to improve your oral and overall health.

Cheers to a healthier mouth

When you drink alcohol, you make less saliva, which means cavity-causing plaque can stay on your teeth for longer.[1] People that drink a substantial amount of alcohol are more likely to:

- Experience tooth decay due to the sugar and acidity of alcohol beverages[1]
- Have an accumulation of bad bacteria leading to gum disease[2]
- Are more likely to experience tooth loss[1]

Here's how you can maintain your oral health if you drink alcohol[3]

- Drink responsibly and in moderation by balancing your consumption with a healthy lifestyle.
- Drink plenty of water before, during and after ingesting alcohol to reduce the impact of sugars and acids on your teeth.
- Brush and floss your teeth daily to prevent tartar and plaque build-up and reduce stains.
- Visit your dentist regularly to help reduce tartar and reduce the risk of tooth decay. Dentists may be able to catch any issues early when they're still small.

You can be tobacco-free

Smoking can cause:[4]

- Gum disease, which can lead to tooth loss
- Oral cancer
- Bad breath
- Tooth discoloration
- Leukoplakia (white patches inside the mouth)
- Loss of bone in the jaw

Tobacco in any form is damaging to your oral health

Vaping, chewing tobacco, and smoking cigars and pipes all pose similar problems. Quit today at smokefree.gov.

Schedule a check-up today.

Regular cleanings help to keep your mouth healthy. Find an in-network dentist at **myCigna.com**.

1. Penn Dental Medicine, University of Pennsylvania. "Alcohol and Oral Health: What You Need to Know." June 25, 2023. https://penndentalmedicine.org/blog/is-alcohol-bad-for-your-teeth/#:~:text=Alcohol%20and%20Dry%20Mouth,swallowing%2C%20and%20a%20sore%20throat. Last accessed February 13, 2025.
2. University Periodontal Associates. "Unveiling the Link Between Alcohol Consumption and Gum Disease: Causes and Prevention." February 2024. https://gums-houston.com/unveiling-the-link-between-alcohol-consumption-and-gum-disease-causes-and-prevention/. Last accessed January 13, 2025.
3. Cigna Healthcare. "How Does Alcohol Affect Your Oral Health." October 2023. https://www.cigna.com/knowledge-center/alcohol-teeth-and-oral-health. Last accessed December 30, 2024.
4. U.S. Food & Drug Administration. "How Tobacco Use Affects Oral Health." November 19, 2024. https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/health-effects-tobacco-use/how-tobacco-use-affects-oral-health. Last accessed January 13, 2025.

Children under age 13 are not permitted to register for a personal profile at myCigna.com.

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Generations of healthy smiles

The connection between family, genetics and oral health: What you should know

Have you ever seen a family full of healthy smiles? It may not be a coincidence. Here are some surprising facts about the impact family and genetics can have on your oral health.

Fact #1: Genes may play a role in your risk of dental diseases[1]

Do you have a family history of chronic health conditions, such as heart disease or diabetes? If so, you may also be at an increased risk of dental diseases, such as tooth decay and gum disease.[2] That's because there may be a connection between chronic health conditions and oral health issues.

What that means for you

Even if you are at an increased risk of dental diseases based on your family history, that doesn't mean your oral health is completely out of your control. It just means you have to be a little extra diligent.

Here are a few simple things you can do to help reduce your risk of dental diseases:[3]

- Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste
- Floss daily
- Eat a balanced, healthy diet.
- See your dentist regularly for checkups and discuss your family history.

Fact #2: Cavities are contagious[4]

Yes, you read that right. Cavities, or more specifically, the bacteria that causes them, are contagious. Cavities and tooth decay are the same thing: The bacteria that causes them are infectious. This means they can be spread from one person to another, which is especially easy to do among a family.

Fact #3: Some orthodontic issues can be hereditary.[5]

Tooth crowding, overbites, and underbites are some of the reasons you or a family member might need braces. Often, the need for orthodontic treatment can run in families. Just as traits like eye color or hair color can be inherited, so can orthodontic issues.

What that means for you

As with many oral and medical health conditions, early intervention is helpful. In younger patients, an orthodontic check-up by age seven can help identify conditions that make orthodontic treatment more manageable later.[6]

Need help finding a dentist? Visit **myCigna.com** to search for a nearby in-network dentist.

1. CDC. "About Periodontal (Gum) Disease." May 15, 2024. https://www.cdc.gov/oral-health/about/gum-periodontal-disease.html#:~:text=Treatment%20for%20periodontitis%20might%20include:%20*%20A,under%20the%20affected%20gums.%20*%20Surgical%20procedures. Last accessed January 14, 2025.
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6. American Association of Orthodontists. "Can You Get Braces with Baby Teeth? A Guide to Early Orthodontics". June 24, 2024. https://aaoinfo.org/whats-trending/does-my-child-need-to-wait-to-see-an-orthodontist/?_rt=NnwxfGNoaWxkfDE3MDc4NDY5NTk&_rt_nonce=0c89a24d5c. Last accessed February 13, 2025.

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