



## Teeth & Mouth Changes with Aging

As you age, changes occur with your teeth and mouth. Common changes are:

- Fewer taste buds on your tongue, especially for sugary and salty foods, but not for bitter tasting foods
- Drier mouth. The tissues in your mouth get thinner and tend to hold less moisture. This makes your mouth more dry. Some medications can add to the problem. Examples are water pills, some antidepressants, and antihistamines.

- Gum problems. Your gums may recede. This exposes the roots of your teeth and can promote cavities.
- Loss of natural teeth. Proper care of your teeth can prevent this. In persons over age 40, the number one cause of tooth loss is periodontal (gum) disease.

More than half of persons over age 50 have at least one tooth replaced. A tooth or teeth can be replaced as crowns, bridges, partial or full dentures. Dental implants are another option.