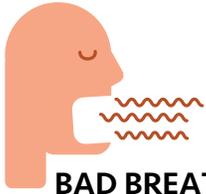


10 dental problems and what to do about them



BAD BREATH

For fresh breath, brush twice a day, floss daily, drink plenty of water, see your dentist regularly, and don't smoke. If bad breath persists, talk to your dentist or doctor.

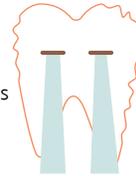
TOOTH SENSITIVITY

Special toothpaste or dental procedures, such as crowns, can help relieve sensitivity to hot or cold. Look for the ADA (American Dental Association) seal of acceptance on products before buying.



ENAMEL EROSION

Acidic foods and drinks can wear away at the tooth's protective enamel over time. This can lead to tooth sensitivity and discoloration. Drinking water and milk instead of soda can help avoid this problem.



WISDOM TEETH

Third molars, or wisdom teeth, often need to be removed during the teen or young adult years. If the jaw doesn't have enough space for them, they can crowd or damage the other teeth.



TOOTH DECAY

When cavities are left untreated, they can get worse and lead to infections and loss of teeth. Get cavities filled quickly to prevent more extensive dental work and serious health problems.



GUM DISEASE

Without treatment, gum disease gets worse and can lead to tooth loss. Symptoms include bleeding, swollen, tender, and red gums, but it often has no signs in the early stages.

STAINED TEETH

Some medications, foods, and drinks can yellow or discolor teeth. Many dentists offer whitening treatments that can help.



MOUTH SORES

A salt water rinse can help with canker sores or irritation from braces or other dental appliances. But, if sores last a week or more, your dentist should take a look.

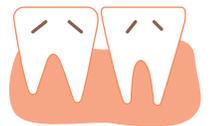


ORAL CANCER

Cancer of the mouth, lips or gums affects about 50,000 Americans every year. Symptoms may include sores, patches, lumps, or pain in the mouth. If you notice any of these signs, contact your dentist or doctor.

TEETH GRINDING

Teeth grinding can lead to cracks and damage to the teeth enamel. A special guard made by your dentist can help protect your teeth. Beware of mouth guards sold over the counter as they can fit improperly and become a choking hazard when you sleep.



Even if you don't have any tooth pain or other symptoms, it's important to see your dentist every six months. Regular checkups with your dentist can prevent or treat these problems so you can keep a healthy, bright smile for life.

Sources: American Dental Association, Oral Health Foundation