1. Take Care of Your Teeth and Gums

Brush Your Teeth.
- Do this at least once or twice a day. Brush after each meal and snack, if you can.
- Use a soft-bristled toothbrush. Brush with a gentle, not a harsh touch.
- Do a thorough job. Brush in small circles across the surfaces of both the upper and lower teeth. Brush the outer, the inner, and chewing surfaces, and the surfaces between the teeth.
- Use a toothbrush that fits your mouth. Change your toothbrush at least every 3 to 4 months.
- If you have braces, keep the braces angled against the gum line.
- Gently brush your tongue which can trap germs.
- Your child younger than 7 years old and some handi- capped individuals may need help to do a thorough job.
- Use a toothpaste with fluoride. If you have sensitive teeth, use a toothpaste made for this.
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- Floss your teeth.
- This Permafold™ is not meant to take the place of expert medical care or treatment. Follow your health care provider’s advice.

Other Tips:
- Protect your teeth from damage and injury: (See Prevention section in topic A.)
- Don’t chew on a bottle top or anything that contains food particles with the teeth. If they don’t effectively prevent the problem.
- Don’t eat sweets, fruit, or starchy foods before bedtime. Saliva production slows down overnight. This allows cavity-causing bacteria to feed on food particles with the teeth. If they don’t effectively prevent the problem.
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2. Diet & Dental Health

When your symptoms are listed under the “Contact Dentist For” heading, call your dentist and state the problem. You will get advice on what to do. When your symptoms are listed under the “Get Immediate Dental Care For” heading, seek your dentist right away or go to a hospital emergency department.

4. Broken or Knocked Out Tooth

Prevention
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3. Dental Checkups

See your dentist every year, at least every year, or as often as your dentist advises. A proper dental checkup:
- Visually checks the soft tissues (tongue, cheek, throat, and gums) for redness and puffiness, or white discoloration.
- Checks the bite and jaw joints.
- Measures any pockets between the teeth and the gums. This checks for periodontal problems.
- Takes a full set of x-rays, as needed.
- Questions you on any areas of concern.
6. Temporomandibular Joint (TMJ) Syndrome

This occurs when the muscles, joints, and ligaments of the jaw move out of alignment.

**Symptoms**
- Earaches, headaches, pain in the jaw area that spreads to the face or neck and shoulders
- Pain when opening and closing the mouth
- Ringing in the ears

**Causes**
- Bruxism (grinding your teeth)
- Sleeping in a way that muscles irritate your jaw or causes tension in your neck.
- Stressed when you sleep or rest outside in the sun.
- Incorrect or uneven bite
- Injury to the jaw

**Treatment**
TMJ may or may not require professional treatment. Many dentists specialize in this diagnosis and treatment. Early intervention may reduce the need for treatment and make surgery unnecessary.

**Treatments**
- Analgesics to relieve pain
- Braces to align teeth
- Therapy to stretch and strengthen jaw muscles
- Surgery

**Get Immediate Dental Care For:**
Not being able to open or close your mouth due to severe pain
Your health plan may require that you see your dentist. The diagnosis and treatment of TMJ.

**Toothache that comes and goes or occurs only with chewing**
For a cavity, pack it with a piece of sterile cotton.
For a toothache, take an acetaminophen tablet.

**Self-Care**
For an emergency toothache, take a pain reliever that can be purchased without a prescription.

**Prevention**
Get regular checkups and cleanings.

**Contact Dentist For:**
- Abscess caused by decay or infection in a tooth
- An abscess forms. Doing this can prevent the loss of a tooth.
- Cavities should be filled.

**Heart Attack Warning Signs**
- Chest pain. This may spread to the arm, neck, or jaw.
- A feeling of tightness, burning, squeezing, fullness, or heaviness in the chest. This lasts more than a few minutes and goes away and comes back.
- Chest discomfort with fainting, lightheadedness, nausea, shortness of breath, or cold sweat.

**Less Common Starting Signs**
- Nausea, sweating, abdominal or stomach pain.
- Dizziness, nausea, shortness of breath, or trouble breathing (in the absence of chest pain).
- Fast or uneven heartbeat or pulse.
- Inability to swallow.
- Unexplained anxiety, fatigue, or weakness.

**For Information, Contact:**
American Dental Association
National Institute of Dental Research (NIDR)
Access 365 health topics on the American Institute for Preventive Medicine's web site: www.HealthyDay.com and double-click on "365 Health Topics."