



GUIDE TO A HEALTHY SMILE

Take charge of your dental health.

See what's included:

- Dental Appointment Log
- Checkup Checklist
- How to Find the Right Dentist
- Brushing Tips
- Dental Emergencies and What to Do



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Your Guide to a Healthy Smile

Keep your smile healthy.



Just think:

In the entire world, **there's no other smile exactly like yours**. Like you, your smile is one-of-a-kind. And like your health, it's worth protecting.



Now think about this:

Research indicates **dental health is closely connected** to conditions like heart disease, strokes, diabetes and even Alzheimer's. So, when you take care of your dental health, you're also helping to take care of your overall health.



So now you know why:

It can be so important to see your dentist for routine checkups. When you miss out on preventive care, **it can increase your risk** of developing certain diseases, plus lead to dental problems that may require more expensive – and painful – services in the future.



Be good to yourself:

Taking care of your dental health is **one of the most important things** you can do for your overall health. And choosing dental coverage from the Physicians Mutual family can help.



Make it easy:

This "Guide to a Healthy Smile" is yours to keep and is full of dental tips and information. Fill it out and store it in a place where you can easily find it. Then use it, along with your dental coverage from Physicians Mutual Insurance Company, to help you stay on top of your dental care – and **help protect your health and your one-of-a kind smile**.

Questions? Give us a call at
1-800-325-7500



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My dentist's information

Dentist's name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Office number (_____) _____

Emergency or after hours (_____) _____

Name of backup dentist _____

Phone number (_____) _____

My dental insurance

Company name _____

Phone number (_____) _____

Policy number _____

Effective date _____

My doctor's information

Doctor's name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Office number (_____) _____

Emergency or after hours (_____) _____

Dental appointments

The American Dental Association recommends two routine dental checkups a year. Use this log to help keep track of your dental visits and any special instructions your dentist may give you after each visit.

My dental appointments

Date _____ Time _____

Comments _____

Date _____ Time _____

Comments _____

Date _____ Time _____

Comments _____

Date _____ Time _____

Comments _____

Date _____ Time _____

Comments _____

Date _____ Time _____

Comments _____

Date _____ Time _____

Comments _____



Due for a routine checkup?

Don't put it off. Regular checkups make it easier for your dentist to catch diseases like oral cancer early on, and small problems before they become more serious and costly to treat.

YOUR CHECKUP CHECKLIST

Make the most of your next dental visit.

To help make the most of your next dental visit, here's a checklist of important documents and background information you'll want to bring with you, along with a list of questions to ask your dentist.

Items to bring to your next checkup

- Your dental insurance or Medicaid cards
- List of medications, vitamins and any herbal remedies
- List of medical conditions and allergies
- Names and phone numbers of your doctors and health care providers
- Name and phone number of the person you want notified in the case of a medical emergency
- Your dentures or partials, even if you don't wear them

Six questions to ask your dentist

1. What should I look for between checkups?
2. What can I do to help improve my dental health?
3. What foods are good for my teeth and gums?
4. How is my medication affecting my dental health?
5. Which treatments are absolutely necessary and what are my choices?
6. Is there anything my family doctor should know about my dental health?



Uneasy in the dentist's chair?

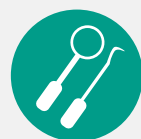
Don't be afraid to talk with your dentist and ask questions – it can help put your mind at ease.

FIVE TIPS TO HELP YOU FIND A DENTIST

Finding the right dentist can help ensure you receive the dental care you deserve.

Below are five tips to help make sure the dentist you choose is a good fit for you.

- 1. Convenience.** Look for a dentist with convenient office hours. Not having to take time off work or rearrange your schedule will help make it easier to get in your two preventive checkups every year. Also, try to choose a dentist whose office is close to your work or home.
- 2. Office staff.** The front desk staff and dental assistants can have as big of an impact on your visit as the actual dentist. Make sure you feel comfortable with how you're treated. They should be friendly but professional, efficient but accessible for questions.
- 3. Qualifications.** Look into the dentist's background and training. Does he or she keep up with new technology and techniques? Also ask what types of anesthesia the dentist is permitted to administer, especially if you have a complex treatment coming up.
- 4. Backup plan.** How are emergencies handled if the dentist's office is closed? The dentist may have made arrangements with a nearby office or a colleague to see patients if the office is closed, or if he or she is out of town.
- 5. Billing.** Find out what the dentist charges for common services like cleanings and X-rays. If the dentist can't or won't provide these fees in advance, you might want to seek out someone else. Also ask what type of payment plans are offered for major services, or if you qualify for discounts if you pay in cash.



How can you save money at the dentist?

Dental insurance can help. Look for an insurance policy that covers the services you're most likely to need, like preventive care, fillings, crowns and root canals. Also, be sure to choose coverage that offers a large provider network. In most cases, you'll save money by seeing a dentist within the network – on top of receiving cash benefits for your covered services.

TAKE TIME TO BRUSH UP

Tips to brush your way to a healthier smile.

Use these tips from the American Dental Association on how to properly brush your teeth.

- Brush twice a day with a soft-bristled brush.
- Put your toothbrush at a 45-degree angle to your gums.
- Brush the outer, inner and chewing surfaces of your teeth.
- Clean the inner surfaces of your front teeth by tilting the brush vertically and making several up-and-down strokes.

Plus, don't forget to:

- Brush your tongue – it helps to remove bacteria and keep your breath fresh.
- Floss between your teeth at least once a day – this helps remove decay-causing plaque and food particles your brush can't reach.

And finally:

- Replace your toothbrush every three to four months – not only do the bristles break down over time, they can become a breeding ground for bacteria.



Want to give serious dental problems the brush-off?

It starts now with regular brushing and routine checkups twice a year.
Keep your smile healthy!

DENTAL EMERGENCIES

Knowing what to do can mean the difference between saving and losing your tooth.

Here are four common dental emergencies and tips from the American Dental Association on how to deal with them.

Toothache

- Rinse your mouth with warm water.
- Gently floss the sore tooth to remove any trapped food.
- Do not put an aspirin on the tooth – it may burn the gum tissue.
- See your dentist as soon as possible.

Cracked tooth

- Rinse your mouth with warm water to clean out any debris.
- Apply a cold compress to your face to help prevent swelling.
- See your dentist as soon as possible.

Object wedged between teeth

- Gently try to remove the object with dental floss.
- Do not try to remove the object with a sharp or pointed instrument.
- If you can't remove the object, see a dentist or visit the emergency room.

Knocked-out tooth

- If the tooth is permanent, gently try to insert the tooth back into the socket without touching the root. Do not try to insert a baby tooth.
- If you can't insert the tooth, keep it moist by placing it between your cheek and gums, or in a small container of milk.
- See your dentist immediately, and be sure to bring the tooth with you.



For dental emergencies, call:

Dentist's name _____

Location _____

Office number (_____) _____

After hours (_____) _____

Relative or friend _____

Phone (_____) _____