



## Did You Know?

### Good oral health means good overall health!

- FACT:** Poor oral health can cause pain, discomfort and bad breath. It can also put you at risk of serious disease, like heart disease and stroke.
- FACT:** If you do not brush and floss daily, the sticky film of bacteria in your mouth, called plaque, can harden into tartar and help cause gum disease (gingivitis).
- FACT:** If untreated, bacteria in plaque and in infected gums can travel from your mouth into your blood stream. This has been linked to clogging of arteries and damage to heart valves.
- FACT:** **Smoking** is a major risk factor for oral and dental diseases, including oral cancer. Tobacco reduces blood flow to the gums, lowering the supply of oxygen and nutrients needed to fight bacterial gum infection.
- FACT:** **People with diabetes** are more at risk to get gum disease, and this can put them at greater risk of diabetic complications.
- FACT:** **Pregnant women** with gum disease are at higher risk of delivering early-term, low birth weight babies than women without gum disease.

### To lower your risk:

- Brush and floss your teeth daily.
- Visit your dentist regularly.
- Ask your dentist or pharmacist about the right toothpaste, toothbrush and floss for you.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Do not smoke. If you do, be sure to visit your dentist regularly.
- If you are pregnant, be sure to eat healthy foods and maintain good oral health.
- Brush your children's teeth for them until they have the ability to do properly themselves. For example, when they can write their own name (not print), they should be able to brush their teeth with your guidance.