

Understanding Your Oral Health

Your smile is worth a thousand words and keeping it healthy is worth even more.



Why is preventive dental care important?

- Brushing, flossing, eating a healthy diet, and seeing your dentist regularly helps to avoid dental disease.
- Routine exams and cleanings can prevent the additional cost associated with fillings, root canals, extractions, etc.

Best practices for routine dental care from the American Dental Association¹

- Brush your teeth twice a day with an ADA accepted fluoride toothpaste.
- Replace your toothbrush every three or four months.
- Clean between teeth daily with floss or an interdental cleaner.
- Eat a balanced diet, and limit soft drinks and between-meal snacks.

Did you know?

- Tobacco use causes an increased level of calculus (hardened plaque) to form on teeth, which can lead to tooth decay and gum disease.²
- Studies suggest that a diet low in fruits and vegetables may be linked to an increased risk of cancers of the oral cavity.³
- Pregnancy can increase the risk of oral health problems like cavities and gum disease. Seeing your dentist during pregnancy for a routine checkup is important for your dental health.⁴

For more information and tools, visit MetLife's Oral Health Library⁵ at oralfitnesslibrary.com

1. American Dental Association. "Brushing Your Teeth", <http://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/az-topics/b/brushing-your-teeth>. Accessed May 2025.

2. Gum disease risk factors. American Academy of Periodontology website. <http://www.perio.org/consumer/risk-factors>. Accessed May 2025.

3. American Cancer Society, "Oral Cavity and Oropharyngeal Cancer Causes, Risk Factors, and Prevention", <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/oral-cavity-and-oropharyngeal-cancer/causes-risks-prevention.html>. Accessed May 2025.

4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Pregnancy and Oral Health Facts", <https://www.cdc.gov/oral-health/data-research/facts-stats/fast-facts-pregnancy-and-oral-health.html>. Accessed May 2025.

5. All information provided on this website ("Website") is intended for your general knowledge only and is not a substitute for obtaining medical or dental advice for specific medical or dental conditions or other advice from your dentists or doctors. By making this Website available to you, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and its affiliates (collectively, "MetLife") is not engaged in rendering any such advice. Use of this Website is subject to all the terms stated herein. Insofar as the information provided on this Website is from third parties or links to third party websites, it has no association whatsoever with MetLife, unless expressly stated.

Like most group benefit programs, benefit programs offered by MetLife and its affiliates contain certain exclusions, exceptions, reductions, limitations, waiting periods and terms for keeping them in force. Please contact MetLife or your plan administrator for costs and complete details. You may be financially responsible for copayments, deductibles, or any other amounts in excess of those MetLife is required to pay for covered services as described in your dental certificate and/or policy.

This information is intended for your general knowledge only and is not a substitute for obtaining medical or dental advice for specific medical or dental conditions or other advice from your dentists or doctors. By making this information available to you, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and its affiliates (collectively, "MetLife") is not engaged in rendering any such advice. Insofar as the information provided is from third parties, it has no association whatsoever with MetLife, unless expressly stated.