Good Dental Health: Avoid Pain and Bills

By Jessica Holscher

Dental care is an important aspect of your health, and it is not difficult to achieve good oral hygiene. Not only does good oral health help your mouth and teeth, but it can affect your overall health in general. Proper dental care helps you avoid expensive oral procedures, pain and is a must for a healthy body.

**Basic Care**

Basic dental care is easy to accomplish. It involves regular brushing, flossing and seeing your dentist twice a year for cleanings and routine examinations. It is also important to avoid sugary or acidic foods and beverages, such as lemons or soda. These foods and beverages cause cavities and other more serious teeth problems, including gum disease. If you do choose to eat foods or drink beverages that cause tooth decay, it is a good idea to brush or rinse your mouth out after consuming. By choosing to follow a regular dental hygiene routine, you avoid spending extra money on pricy and painful dental procedures, bad breath, dingy teeth and painful tooth decay.

**Dental Problems**

There are many dental problems that occur if you do not take proper care of your teeth. Some of these are harmless but still cause embarrassment to the affected individual. Other dental problems are extremely painful and cause major health issues.

* **Bad breath** - Although it is not painful, bad breath is embarrassing and unattractive. Bad breath can also be a sign of a more serious problem, such as oral cancer or gum disease. It is important to have chronic bad breath examined by a doctor.
* **Cavities and other tooth decay** – Due to bacteria and food particles in your mouth, plaque forms on your teeth. This plaque is easily removed during brushing and flossing; however, if you do not brush and floss regularly, it quickly turns into tartar. Tartar eats away at teeth, causing cavities, and it can only be removed by a dentist.
* **Gum disease** - Also known as periodontal disease, gum disease is caused by an infection in the gums around the teeth. It causes your gums to become inflamed and tender.
* **Oral cancer** - Oral cancer can be deadly and is not to be taken lightly. The Oral Cancer Foundation estimates that someone dies every hour from oral cancer. Luckily, if diagnosed in the early stages, it is highly treatable.
* **Tooth erosion** - Tooth erosion happens when the tooth structure begins to disappear due to acid eating the enamel. With the enamel gone, your tooth is highly susceptible to serious decay and injection.
* **Abscess or infected tooth** - An abscessed tooth is usually caused by tooth decay. Bacteria begin to form in the tooth, and pus is created. This causes severe pain, discomfort and swelling. An infected tooth is generally treated with a regiment of antibiotics. Often a root canal is also needed.

**Oral Health and Overall Health**

Keeping your teeth healthy does not only affect your oral health, it can affect your entire wellbeing. There are many diseases and illnesses that have been linked to poor oral health. These conditions could potentially be avoided with proper oral health care.

* Cardiovascular disease, heart disease and clogged arteries
* Cancers of the head, neck, esophagus and lungs
* Respiratory problems from inhaling bacteria from periodontal disease

While good dental health is not the cure for these problems, it is a good idea to reduce your risk by keeping your mouth healthy and happy.

**Cosmetic**

Perhaps you do everything right and you still have something wrong with your teeth: poor color, chips/cracks, etc. Or maybe you did not quite take well enough care when you were younger, and are now paying the price. Luckily, there has been an explosion of cosmetic dentistry options. Patients with yellow or dingy teeth can get them whitened. Tooth colored fillings made from porcelain can replace metal fillings. Other cosmetic procedures include:

* Dental bridges
* Veneers
* Gum lift
* Porcelain crowns

With so many cosmetic procedures available, you don’t have to feel embarrassed about your smile. Whatever is wrong with your smile, cosmetic dentists have the solution.

**Conclusion**

Dental care is extremely important, and simple. With regular brushing and visits to your dentist, you avoid painful oral health issues and dental procedures. Luckily, there are cosmetic procedures that can give you that smile you have always wanted, but taking care of your oral health can save you money, health problems and pain.