

Importance of Preventative Dental and Oral Healthcare

Dental care involves taking care of your teeth, gums, and the related structures of the mouth. While it not only benefits your teeth and gums, but it plays a vital part in maintaining your overall health. A person's mouth naturally contains bacteria, most of which is harmless; between your body's natural defenses and good oral care (i.e. brushing and flossing), the bacteria remains in control. When the harmful bacteria grow out of control it can cause various oral infections, such as tooth decay and gum disease. If the harmful bacteria are not kept under control it could enter the bloodstream and cause serious problems throughout the rest of the body.

A report from the Mayo Clinic states that Diabetes "reduces the body's resistance to infection, putting the gums at risk." The report goes on to state that "people who have inadequate blood sugar control may develop more-frequent and severe infections of the gums and the bone that holds the teeth in place." This means that individuals with uncontrolled Diabetes are far more susceptible to tooth loss than those individuals who do not have Diabetes and/or have their blood sugar under control. Some research has also suggested that heart disease and stroke may be linked to oral bacteria, specifically chronic inflammation from periodontitis.

As important as dental care is for adults, it is even more important for children. Dental care and prevention received as a child determines a child's dental needs well into their adult life. Research shows that dental and oral care habits, such as brushing and flossing regularly, learned as a child are a good indicator of the long-term dental/oral outcomes as adults. One of the top reasons for school-aged children being absent from school is due to dental and other oral problems. Not only are these children missing more class time, but their academic performance is lower when compared to students who have good dental/oral health.

The set of teeth we are born with are intended to last us a lifetime with the proper preventative dental care. Here are a few dental preventative facts, courtesy of the American Dental Association (ADA). The ADA recommends brushing your teeth twice a day with ADA-approved fluoride toothpaste and replacing your toothbrush every three to four months or sooner if the bristles become frayed. Clean between teeth daily with floss or an interdental cleaner and eating a well-balanced diet and limit of snacking between meals. Most importantly visit your dentist regularly for professional cleanings and oral exams.

Chambers Community Health Centers (CCHC) includes two clinics, Bayside Clinic located in Anahuac and West Chambers Medical Center located in Mont Belvieu; both clinics are designated and funded Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and are a part of the Chambers Health system. As an FQHC, the clinics are required by the federal grant to provide all the required primary, preventative, and supplemental health services, either directly or through contract/referral, including dental and mental/behavioral health services, to the target population through its current sites. The recent construction and opening of the new state-of-the-art Bayside Clinic, in Anahuac, allowed for not only an expansion in square footage, but the expansion of services, which will soon include dental services. So, be sure to check your local newspaper on the opening date for the Bayside Dental Clinic and how to schedule an appointment with Janet Grobe Hood, DDS and her qualified dental staff.

We appreciate everyone's support and patience as we progress and grow so that we may continue our tradition of being "What You Need, Where You Are". A part of the Chambers Health system, Chambers Community Health Centers (Bayside Clinic and West Chambers Medical Center) operations would not be possible without the direction and support of Chambers Health.

For more information regarding our services, please visit our website at www.chambershealth.org