

# BASICS OF GOOD ORAL HYGIENE FOR LONG-TERM CARE RESIDENTS



This tip sheet helps long-term care staff improve oral health for their residents.

## 1

### BUILD YOUR DENTAL KIT

#### Toothbrush

- ✓ Always store in a cool, dry area
- ✓ A modified toothbrush handle is helpful for patients with mobility issues

#### Toothpaste

- ✓ Use toothpaste with fluoride to reduce the risk of cavities

#### Floss

- ✓ Floss cleans between teeth where a toothbrush cannot



### CREATE A ROUTINE

- ✓ Develop an oral hygiene routine with residents
- ✓ Brush morning and night, and floss every night
- ✓ Communication is important. Speak clearly and slowly.
- ✓ Look for non-verbal clues on how the resident feels

## 2



## 3

### DELIVER PROPER CARE

#### Brushing

- ✓ Brush at least twice per day, before breakfast and after dinner
- ✓ Angle the toothbrush at 45 degrees to the gum line when brushing

#### Floss

- ✓ Floss at least once per day
- ✓ Gently slide the floss against each side of the tooth
- ✓ Do not pull the floss out from between the teeth roughly



### PROMOTE DENTURE CARE

#### Rinse and brush dentures daily

- ✓ Use water and a denture brush
- ✓ Clean the resident's gums and teeth daily after dentures are removed

#### Nighttime Routine

- ✓ Soak in water or denture solution each night
- ✓ Rinse the dentures thoroughly before putting them back in the mouth

#### Careful!

- ✓ Clean the dentures over a folded towel in case it falls

## 4



## 5

### CONDUCT ORAL SCREENINGS

Regular screenings are important for good oral health. They catch diseases and infections early. Any abnormal growths or lesions should be biopsied if they are still present after two weeks.

#### Visual Examination

- ✓ Look for abnormal colors on the tongue, cheeks, gums, and roof of the mouth
- ✓ Check for noticeable tooth decay

#### Palpate

- ✓ Feel facial and oral tissue for any lumps, bumps, or areas of tenderness



### Health Education is Powerful Medicine

