

20 Ways that Hygiene Visits Benefit You

1. ***A hygiene visit is like a visit to the spa for your teeth and gums.*** When you visit one of our hygienists, your teeth are cleaned and polished. You leave her smiling and with your teeth and gums feeling fresh and clean.
2. ***You keep your teeth, because losing teeth is not a natural part of the aging process.*** In generations past, people lost their teeth due to poor oral hygiene that led to tooth decay and gum disease. It is more common to lose front teeth due to gum disease than back teeth, but all teeth may be at risk if gum disease goes unchecked and untreated. If you follow our oral care recommendations consistently and visit us regularly for professional exams and hygiene treatment, you can plan on keeping your teeth for many, many years.
3. ***You may not know that you have a “silent disease.”*** Periodontal or gum disease is called a “silent disease” because patients often do not experience pain until the disease is very advanced. A dental examination and a thorough cleaning will reveal whether gum disease is present. Our motto is “Don’t wait until it hurts!”
4. ***Oral health is part of overall health.*** The bacteria that cause gum disease do not stay in the mouth. They are carried through the bloodstream to all parts of the body. Although research is ongoing, there are associations between gum disease and a number of systemic conditions, such as pregnancy complications, diabetes, respiratory ailments, heart disease, osteoporosis – and the list is growing. We want to help protect your general health – not only the health of your teeth and gums.
5. ***We screen you for oral cancer.*** The doctor’s examination that is conducted in conjunction with the hygiene visit includes a check for oral cancer. The American Cancer Society’s most recent estimates for oral cavity and oropharyngeal cancers in the United States state that approximately 39,500 people will get oral cavity or oropharyngeal cancer and an estimated 7,500 people will die of these cancers. Some of these patients also have undiagnosed cancer in other parts of the body. As with the other forms of cancer, early detection is very important and greatly improves the chances for successful treatment and survival.
6. ***We spot small problems before they become big problems.*** Hygiene visits allow the doctor the opportunity to do an oral exam to check your teeth, gums, existing restorations and your overall health. Using all the technology at our disposal, including radiographs when indicated, we can help you maintain your oral health and quite possibly avoid dental emergencies.
7. ***It’s not just a “cleaning.”*** The word “cleaning” hardly does justice to the range of treatment provided by our hygienists. Some patients require only conventional professional cleanings in our office on a periodic basis, while others need deep pocket scaling to control gum disease.

The doctor and our hygienists work together as a professional team to provide you with the best hygiene options for optimal oral health.

8. **Hygiene visits save you a significant amount of money over time.** Hygiene visits are part of our prevention program. They are the most conservative way to control periodontal disease because we always prefer nonsurgical treatment if possible when treating gum disease. Avoiding hygiene visits often leads to the need for more extensive – and expensive – treatment later.
9. **Hygiene visits help you protect your prior investments in your dental health.** Patients who have had periodontal procedures, dental implants or other restorative procedures need to maintain excellent oral health to avoid future problems. Regular hygiene visits in our office give us the opportunity to stay ahead of dental problems and keep your teeth and gums healthy over time.
10. **You always learn something new.** Our hygienists are highly trained and skilled. They always take the time to educate you about proper home care. For example, there are simple tips and techniques that make brushing and flossing more effective. You probably learned how to brush and floss when you were a child, but has your technique improved? When you learn how to take better care of your teeth and gums, you enjoy better oral health.
11. **Not all cleanings are the same.** In our office, the hygienists have an array of instruments and the training necessary to meet your individual needs. By analyzing x-rays carefully, the doctor and hygienists choose the best instruments and take into consideration many factors such as tooth anatomy to give you the best possible experience.
12. **We like to get to know you so we can provide personalized care.** In addition to providing individualized care, our hygienists take the time to get to know you. They want to understand your concerns, help you meet your goals and answer questions. Our hygienists are professionals who take great satisfaction in developing a rapport with you.
13. **At each visit, we are better prepared to help you.** There are always new advances in the dental profession. Hygienists in our office follow the doctor's example by being lifelong learners. The doctor participates in Seattle Study club education, an international organization dedicated to helping dentists and their teams stay on the leading edge of the profession. Our hygienists actively participate in continuing dental educational courses so they can incorporate the most up-to-date scientific information into our dental practice.
14. **We can help treat dry mouth.** Regular dental hygiene visits are especially important for people as they age because many suffer from dry mouth, which means that the flow of saliva is diminished. Saliva is important for preventing tooth decay by rinsing away food particles and

neutralizing acids. In addition to being a part of aging, dry mouth can also be caused by both prescription and over-the-counter medications. We can help you with this problem.

15. ***We will check your bite.*** The way the teeth come together is very important. Over time, you may develop bit problems that lead to uneven or excessive wear on your teeth and problems with the temporomandibular joint (TMJ). At the time of your hygiene visit, the doctor will check your bite and recommend any needed treatment to keep you comfortable and functional.
16. ***We can do a better job than you of removing plaque and tartar.*** Plaque is the sticky substance that builds up around the gum line. Tartar is hardened plaque that is very difficult for you to remove at home. Both contain harmful bacteria. One of the goals of a professional hygiene visit is to clean your teeth professionally by removing plaque and tartar.
17. ***We will check for cavities*** – including the “invisible” ones. There are some cavities that cannot be seen with the naked eye. We have the instruments and the training necessary to detect cavities when they are very small, which means minimally invasive treatment for you.
18. ***You get all your questions answered.*** There are many different brands of toothpaste, floss, mouthwash and other oral care products. Ask us for recommendations so you can keep your teeth and gums healthy and avoid bad breath.
19. ***Hygiene visits are easier when they are more frequent.*** If you are concerned about a hygiene visit, let us know. We will do everything possible to keep you comfortable during a visit. You should also be aware that more frequent hygiene visits result in easier hygiene visits because you have good baseline oral health.
20. ***You should take advantage of 21st century dentistry to protect your health.*** Anyone who has the opportunity should take advantage of today’s dental care. Just a couple of generations ago, dental problems were rampant and it was not uncommon for people to lose. Teeth. You are fortunate to live at a time when tooth decay and gum disease can be prevented – as long as you step into our modern office regularly.

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