

# Why do I need to see a dentist?



Your oral health (teeth, gums, and tongue) is connected to your overall health. Prevent and find big health problems by:

- » Taking care of your mouth at home
- » Seeing a dentist 2 times a year (every 6 months)
- » Taking your children to a dentist by their first birthday



## What big health problems can a dentist help prevent?

If you do not take good care of your mouth, little problems, like bad breath and sore gums, can turn into big problems, like:

- » Tooth decay (cavities)
- » Gum disease
- » Heart disease



## What big health problems can a dentist help find?

By checking your mouth, your dentist can often see signs of:

- » Low red blood cells
- » Eating disorders
- » Diabetes
- » Heart disease
- » Kidney failure
- » Poor immune function (you get sick easily)

Learning that you have these signs can help you get treatment early



## When do I need to call a dentist?

Call a dentist right away if you see any of these signs:

- » Your gums bleed easily
- » Your gums are red, swollen, and tender
- » Your gums are pulling away from your teeth
- » You have bad breath that will not go away
- » Your adult teeth are loose
- » Your teeth start fitting together differently when you bite
- » Your dentures or partial dentures do not fit like they used to
- » Your tongue is burning and red
- » Your tooth enamel is eroding
- » You have regular, unexplained sores or ulcers on your tongue or gums
- » Your jaw hurts for no clear reason

## How do I keep my mouth healthy?

- » Brush 2 times a day for 2 minutes each time.
- » Floss (clean between your teeth) 1 time a day.
- » Eat tooth-friendly foods (milk, crunchy veggies, leafy green veggies).
- » Avoid food and drinks that have a lot of sugar (granola bars, sodas, sports drinks).
- » See a dentist 2 times a year (every 6 months).
- » Take advantage of free dental screenings at your work, church, or community center.



### So... why should I see a dentist 2 times a year?

- To remind you and your kids how to take care of your teeth and gums
- To keep you and your family from getting tooth decay, gum disease, or other serious health problems
- To look for signs of other serious health problems
- To set a good example for your whole family.

//////////  
**If you need help finding a  
dentist, call 501-686-2720.**

**Are you worried you cannot  
pay for dental care?  
If so, call 501-686-2720.**  
//////////



**Your Health. Our Priority.**  
[arminorityhealth.com](http://arminorityhealth.com)

 **DELTA DENTAL®**

**ArkansasFoundation**