

Mouth Care

1. Give mouth care at least twice a day or more often if the person's mouth is dry, cracked or has open sores
2. Make the person comfortable either sitting straight up in bed, sitting in front of a sink or table, or lying in bed.
3. Wash your hands for 15 seconds.
4. You will need the following supplies:
 - a. Soft bristled toothbrush. An even rounded brush with soft multi-tufted nylon bristles is best.
 - b. Fluoridated toothpaste
 - c. Essential oil-containing mouthwash
 - d. A glass of water and straw
 - e. Small face towel
 - f. Paper towels
 - g. Bathroom sink or if in bed, use a small bowl or small plastic emesis (eM- ah- sis) basin (You can buy at a medical supply store, it is kidney shaped)
 - h. Clean Disposable gloves
5. If you help someone who sits in bed, have a small table or a flat surface nearby to set up your supplies.
6. Put on the clean disposable gloves.
7. Have the towel, the bowl or basin, and cup of water close by. Here is a safety tip – if the person you are helping is sitting on the side of the bed and is unsteady - never leave their side while giving mouth care.
8. Have the person rinse the mouth with water or half water/half mouthwash and spit it into the bowl.
9. Now is a good time to check the inside of the mouth, including the gums, teeth and mucous membrane. Look very carefully at any areas the person tells you are sore or irritated. Look for:
 - a. Sores, especially ones that bleed
 - b. Spots
 - c. Lumps or thickening
 - d. Color change
10. Apply toothpaste to cover the length of the bristles on the brush.
11. Pour a small amount of water over the paste while holding the brush over the plastic bowl or basin. If you are going to brush the teeth, ask the person to not bite down on your fingers.
12. If the person is able to use the toothbrush, let them do it. But, be sure they are cleaning all surfaces of their teeth. If not, brush the person's teeth.
13. Brush the teeth by holding the bristles at a 45 degree angle to the gum line. Bristles should touch both the tooth surface and the gum line.
14. Brush the outer surfaces of 2 to 3 teeth at a time by moving the bristles in a back and forth rolling motion from the gum to the tip of each tooth.

15. Take your time. Let the person spit out any excess saliva or paste. But continue and move to the next set of 2 to 3 teeth and so on. Be thorough and brush all surfaces of the teeth 2 to 3 times.
16. Use the same motion to brush the inner teeth surfaces. Tilt the brush vertically behind the front teeth. Make several up & down strokes using the front half of the brush.
17. Then clean the biting surfaces of the teeth by holding the top of the bristles parallel with the teeth and brushing gently back and forth.
18. Stop at any time to give the person the chance to spit out excess saliva/ toothpaste or to give the person time to catch their breath.
19. If the person suddenly begins to cough and makes choking noises, have the person spit out the secretions and sit up straight to aid breathing.
 - a. If choking continues and the person is having trouble breathing call 911.
20. Finish by lightly brushing the person's tongue as he or she opens their mouth. Lightly apply the brush. Do not cause the person to gag – as this could cause choking of tooth paste. If you know the person normally gags easily, avoid this step or have them do it by themselves.
21. Have the person rinse the mouth thoroughly with water or half mouthwash and half water. Let the person take several sips and swish the water across all teeth surfaces.
22. Have the person spit water into the bowl. Wipe off the person's mouth.
23. If the person's lips are cracked or swollen, apply a water-soluble lubricant to the lips.
24. Help the person return to a comfortable position in bed.
25. Use a paper towel to wipe off the table surface. Remove your supplies.
26. Take off the gloves and dispose in a regular trash container.
27. Wash your hands

Brushing Teeth of Bedridden Person

1. Give mouthcare to a bedridden person at least twice a day or more often if the person's mouth becomes dry, cracked or has open sores.
2. Wash your hands for 15 seconds.
3. You will need the following supplies:
 - a. Soft bristled toothbrush.
 - b. Fluoridated toothpaste
 - c. Essential oil-containing mouthwash
 - d. Two glasses of water and a straw
 - e. Small face towel
 - f. Paper towels
 - g. Bathroom sink or a shallow bowl or small plastic emesis basin
 - h. Pair of clean disposable gloves
 - i. A gravy baster
4. Place the supplies on a table near the person's bed. Help the person turn on their side, facing you. Here is a tip. Have the person bend the knee of the leg farthest from you. Then place your hands over the knee and their shoulder and help them to turn towards you.
5. Remove the pillow and be sure the person's head is turned down toward the mattress. This makes sure, that toothpaste and saliva will drain out of the mouth and not towards the back of the throat.
6. Put on the gloves.
7. Place the towel under the person's head and the plastic basin or bowl just under the chin. Ask the person to not bite down on your hand. Never use a hard object to wedge the mouth open.
8. Allow the person to rinse their mouth with water or half water/half mouthwash using a straw.
9. This is a good time to check the inside of the mouth. Take the flashlight to look at all gum surfaces, the teeth and tongue.
 - a. Use a tongue blade to make it easier to look into the person's mouth
 - b. Have the person say "ah" and place the tongue blade lightly on the tongue and look inside.
 - c. Look for any ulcers, lumps or thickening, unusual redness or color changes, or debris around the teeth.
 - d. Pay close attention to an area the person says is sore or irritated.
10. Apply enough toothpaste to cover the length of the bristles on the brush.
11. Moisten the toothpaste with water and brush all tooth surfaces.
12. Brush the teeth by holding the bristles at a 45 degree angle to the gum line. Bristles should touch both the tooth surface and gum line.
13. Brush the outer surfaces of 2 to 3 teeth at a time by moving the bristles in a back and forth rolling motion from the gum to the tip of each tooth.
14. Take your time. If the person starts to gag let them spit out paste and saliva, but continue. Move to the next set of 2 to 3 teeth and so on. Be thorough and brush all surfaces of the teeth 2 to 3 times.

15. Use the same motion to brush the inner teeth surfaces. Tilt the brush vertically behind the front teeth.
16. Make several up & down strokes using the front half of the brush. Clean the biting surfaces of the teeth by holding the top of the bristles parallel with the teeth and brushing gently back and forth.
17. Stop at any time to give the person the chance to spit out excess saliva/ toothpaste or to give the person time to catch their breath.
18. Because the person is lying down, it is easy to choke on fluid in the mouth.
19. If the person suddenly begins to cough and make choking noises, have the person stay on their side with their mouth turned down towards the mattress. This aids breathing
 - a. If choking continues and the person has difficulty breathing, call 911.
20. If the person has trouble spitting, use the gravy baster to remove excess saliva or toothpaste.
 - a. Squeeze the bulb
 - b. Insert the tip of the baster in the back of the mouth
 - c. Release the bulb to fill the baster with the saliva, then remove the baster.
 - d. **Do not** squeeze the bulb as this will push saliva into the mouth and could cause choking.
21. Finish mouth care by lightly brushing the person's tongue as he or she opens their mouth. Do not cause the person to gag – as this could cause choking.
22. If you know the person normally gags easily, avoid this step or have them do it by themselves.
23. Once the teeth have been cleaned, rinse off the brush in one glass of water. After moistening the brush with water, rinse off the person's teeth.
24. Repeat rinse several times to be sure all toothpaste has been removed. If the person is able to take sips of water using a straw, let him or her rinse their mouth on a sip of water from the second glass.
25. Wipe the person's mouth. If the person's lips are cracked or swollen, apply a water-soluble lubricant (like Chap-Stick) to the lips.
26. Replace the pillow and be sure that he or she is comfortable.
27. Clean off your work surface, dispose of supplies.
28. Remove and dispose of gloves.
29. Wash your hands.