

Share the Same Smile

NSW GOVERNMENT Health
Centre for Oral Health Strategy

NSW Refugee Health Service
NSWHEALTH

REFUGEE HEALTH NETWORK QUEENSLAND
Adapted for Qld by the Refugee Health Network Qld



Dental Health Information for Recent Migrants

The Refugee Health Network Qld thanks NSW Health - Centre for Oral Health Strategy and NSW Refugee Health Service for the permission to adapt this presentation for Queensland.

READ THE PRESENTERS NOTES BEFORE USING THIS PRESENTATION

Introduce yourself

Today I am going to talk to you about how you can look after your teeth.

I will talk about why your teeth are important and what problems you can get.

I will also talk about how you can avoid getting problems by cleaning them well, eating well, drinking well and staying well by seeing a dentist.

I will also tell you about the free public dental service and how you can use it.

I will try to answer any questions you have, but I am not a dentist and don't work for the public dental service so I might not always be able to help.

If I can't answer your question, I will write it down and find out the answer for you later.

Healthy Mouth and Healthy Body



A healthy mouth is important for a number of reasons:

It helps you to comfortably eat a healthy diet...

A healthy mouth allows you to eat the widest possible range of healthy foods without pain – especially hot and cold foods and crunchy foods like carrots.

Allows you to speak and smile properly...

A nice smile might mean that you feel better about how you look.

Teeth are important for speaking as you press your tongue against them to make some sounds.

And helps you have nice smelling breath.

An unhealthy mouth contains the germs that cause bad breath.

Keeping your mouth healthy reduces the number of these germs in your mouth, and so your breath will stay smelling nice.

Having a healthy mouth can also help you keep the rest of your body healthy.

Having an unhealthy mouth has been linked to causing sickness in other parts of your body, or making them worse.

For example, heart disease, pneumonia, and HIV/AIDS.

Not being able to eat properly because of bad teeth can also make these sicknesses worse.

Taking care of your teeth is up to both you and your dentist.

You can do a lot of things yourself to take care of your mouth, and I will talk about these now.

Later I will talk about how you can get to see a dentist for a check up or to fix teeth you have a problem with.

Healthy Mouth



You should be able to eat without pain, speak normally, and smile without worrying about how your teeth look or your breath smells.

Your teeth should be clean, your mouth should be wet, and your gums should be pink and not puffy.

To be clean, your teeth should not have any food stuck in them and should have no plaque, but do not need to be perfectly "white" to be healthy.

The top pictures are of an adult's healthy mouth.

The bottom picture is of a child's healthy mouth.

Even though children's teeth fall out normally as they grow up, it is very important to look after these teeth, and to get into good habits for looking after teeth.

Unhealthy Mouth



These are some pictures of unhealthy mouths.

The main problems which can affect your mouth are plaque, decay, gum disease, bad breath, dry mouth and tooth erosion.

The three pictures on the left are of adults, and show plaque build up and swollen gums at top left, tooth decay top right, and tooth decay and gum disease in the bottom picture.

Unhealthy gums may bleed, especially when teeth are brushed, and will appear red and swollen.

If your gums are bleeding when brushing, this is not a reason to stop brushing. Brushing can help to reduce the gum disease.

Early gum disease is known as gingivitis, and is an inflammation of the gum tissue.

If left untreated, it can get worse and lead to periodontal disease, which is an infection of the tissues that support your teeth and may involve permanent bone loss.

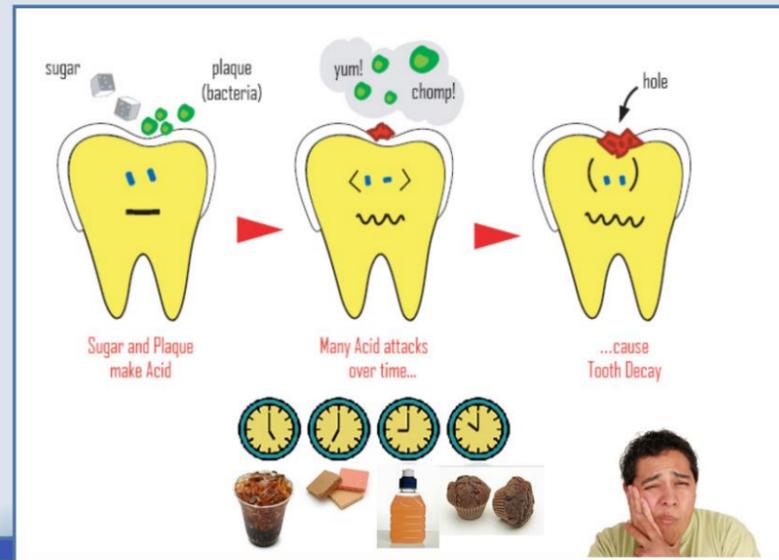
On the right are pictures of children's mouths, both with tooth decay.

The picture at the bottom is very bad tooth decay.

You shouldn't have teeth like this.

Most problems with your teeth and gums can be avoided by keeping your teeth clean and healthy.

How Teeth Decay



Tooth decay is the most common problem people have in their mouth.

When you don't brush your teeth, you get plaque on them. Some germs live in this plaque.

When you eat food, the germs also eat the sugar from the food and then the germs make acid.

Each time you eat, the germs create acid. The more often you eat, the more often you have acid in your mouth. So it is not good to have lots of snacks each day, especially if they are sugary.

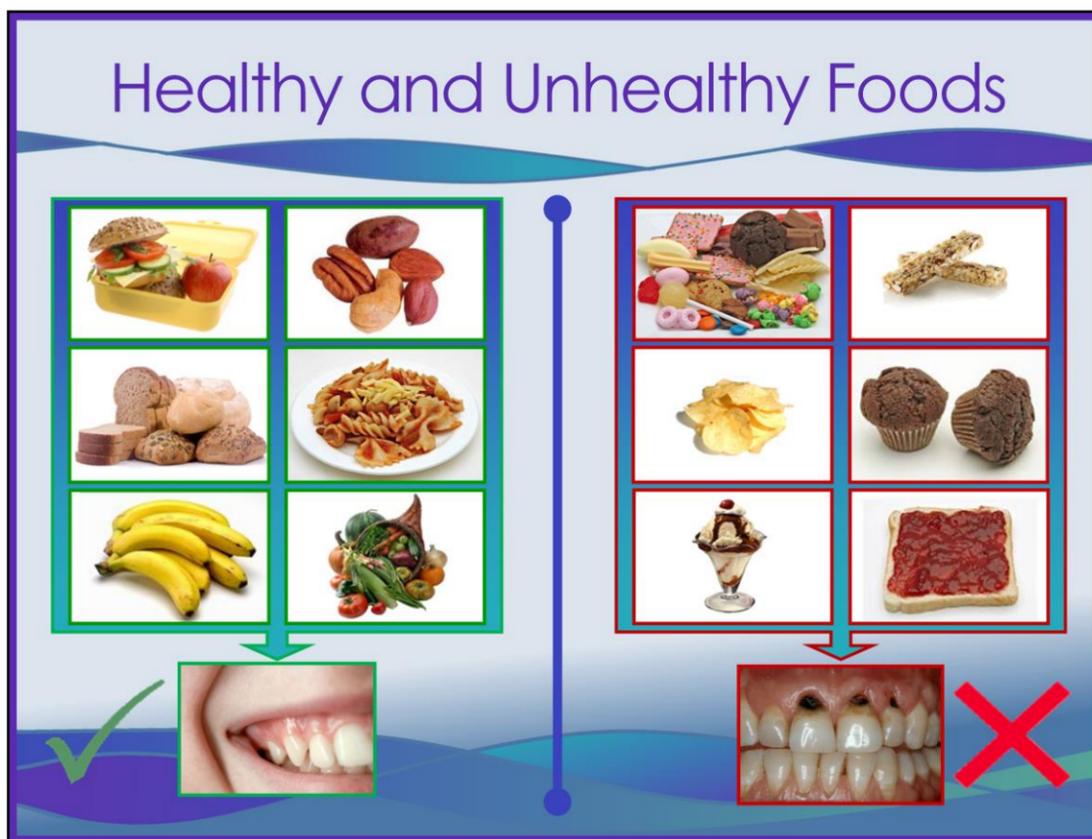
It is better to just have your three main meals, and if you need a snack, have something with no sugar.

The acid wears away the surface of the tooth, and this leads to tooth decay.

Saliva (spit) neutralises the acid in plaque.

If the plaque is brushed off and saliva surrounds the tooth, the enamel surface can harden again.

Healthy and Unhealthy Foods



Eating well is a good way to help keep your mouth healthy.

You should enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods to keep a healthy mouth and healthy body.

Some good foods to eat are vegetables, fruit, nuts, cereals, bread, cheese and plain yogurt.

These are some of the good foods on the left.

Most dental problems are caused by dietary habits.

Foods which have very little sugar are better choices for taking care of your teeth and your health.

To prevent tooth decay eat healthy foods, especially protective foods and drinks such as cheese, milk and plain yogurt.

Crunchy foods can help to clear foods from the mouth as they stimulate saliva flow - these include apples, carrots and celery

Between meals you should enjoy healthy snacks which don't have much sugar in them.

Examples of good snacks are cheese with plain crackers, nuts, or carrots.

Some unhealthy foods are shown on the right.

Eating foods which are sugary and sticky, like cakes, biscuits, lollies, chocolate, muesli bars, and fruit bars can cause problems with your teeth.

Sticky and sugary foods stay in the mouth longer, giving the bacteria more time to turn the sugar into the acids that harm your teeth.

They are especially bad if you have them often or as snacks between meals.

It is the frequency of eating sugar and drinking sugary drinks, rather than the amount of sugar, that is related to tooth decay.

Healthy and Unhealthy Drinks



Tap water is the best drink between meals and at bedtime and it is FREE

Tap water in most places in NSW contains fluoride, which helps to protect teeth against dental decay.

Most bottled water does not have fluoride in it and costs a lot of money.

NSW Health and the Australian Dental Association strongly recommend drinking fluoridated tap water.

Tap water is safe. You do not need to boil your tap water before drinking it.

You only need to boil tap water for drinking is for children who are under 12 months old. Boiling water does not remove fluoride.

Breast milk is best for babies

Breast milk is best for babies and is the only food and drink they need until they are about 6 months old.

For older children and adults plain milk is also a good drink, but you should try to drink it only with a meal.

Sweet and fizzy drinks, can damage your teeth, especially if you drink them often and between meals.

Just like foods, acidic and sugary drinks like fruit juice and soft drink can cause decay or erosion. They are particularly harmful when sipped slowly, or when they are held in the mouth for a while before swallowing.

You should not drink sweet and fizzy drinks everyday.

Try to only have these only some days a week, like on weekends, or on special occasions, and drink with a main meal as this will help reduce the time that your mouth has sugar in it.

Babies and Young Children



If you can, feed your baby only breast milk until they are 6 months old

Breast milk provides the best nutrition and helps protect babies from being sick.

The World Health Organisation recommends giving babies only breast milk until they are 6 months old, and that babies should continue to receive breast milk as well as other age appropriate foods up to two years of age or beyond.

You should only put milk or water in a bottle.

Start teaching your baby to drink from a cup at 6-8 months.

Try to stop using a bottle by 12 months old and use a cup instead.

Your baby should not go to bed with a bottle

Putting your baby to bed with a bottle can also give them bad teeth, especially if the bottle has something other than milk or water.

This happens because milk pools in the mouth, as babies don't swallow as much when they fall asleep.



Baby teeth are important

Baby teeth hold spaces for when the adult teeth come through.

A Child and Family Nurse (Baby Nurse) will have a quick look at your child's teeth when you take your child for a health check.

They can check your child's teeth for the signs of early decay and provide you with information about how to look after your babies teeth

Tooth decay in children can begin early when developing teeth are especially at risk.

Tooth decay begins as white marks or lines that progressively become larger, turning yellow or brown.

If the nurse thinks there is a problem, they can give you a referral to a dental clinic.

In the early stages tooth decay can be stopped or reversed.

The referral means your child may be seen quicker.

You can check your child's teeth yourself.

Show the Lift the Lip fridge magnet.

Just lift up their lip and look out for white or brown spots on the teeth.

If you see white or brown spots, call for a dental appointment.

A healthy mouth will have pale pink, moist gums and the teeth are white and smooth.



Cleaning your teeth well is very important in helping to keep your teeth healthy.

Brushing your teeth, gums, tongue and your cheeks helps to reduce the amount of bacteria in your mouth, especially the plaque that sits on your teeth.

You should brush your teeth twice a day -in the morning and before you go to bed.

Brushing teeth before going to bed is especially important because saliva, which is the mouth's own cleaning system, slows down during the night and leaves the mouth more at risk from decay

It is important to use a toothpaste that has fluoride in it, and you only need to use a small amount of toothpaste.

Nearly all the toothpaste that you can buy in the supermarkets has fluoride in it.

Show some examples of toothpastes and brushes if you have them.

Fluoride in the toothpaste will help protect your teeth and may repair teeth that are in the early stages of decay.

Children who are less than 18 months old don't need to use toothpaste.

You should supervise your children when they are brushing their teeth until they are about 8.

You should not rinse the toothpaste out with water after brushing, because leaving it in your mouth will help protect your teeth.

Spit any excess toothpaste out but do not rinse so the fluoride in the toothpaste can stay around the teeth longer.

The best toothbrush to use is one with soft bristles and a small head.

Brushes with hard brushes might damage your gums and wear away your teeth.

Everyone in your family should use their own toothbrush.

If you share toothbrushes, you may spread bacteria from your mouth to other people in your family - especially to your children.

You need to replace your toothbrush when bristles start to curl.

Once the bristles start to curl they will not clean your teeth as well, and also may have more bacteria in them.



You should brush two times a day – in the morning and before you go to bed

Provide a practical demonstration of tooth brushing

Use a tooth model if you have one

Use small amount of fluoride toothpaste

Demonstrate by putting some paste on a brush or showing picture

Make sure you brush each part of every tooth:

The outsides of your teeth using little circle actions...

Demonstrate on tooth model or picture, or point to outside surface of teeth

Insides of teeth...

Demonstrate on tooth model or picture, or point to insides of teeth

And your chewing teeth (back teeth)...

Demonstrate on tooth model or picture, or point to back teeth

You can also brush your tongue

Your tongue can have bacteria on it, so brushing can help reduce the amount of bacteria in your mouth.

Smoking is Unhealthy



Smoking can cause problems in your mouth and the rest of your body.

Over 15,000 Australians die every year from illnesses caused by smoking.

Smoking may cause bad breath, stained teeth, gum disease and cancer.

Stopping smoking can be hard, but there are lots of people who can help you, and stopping can make a big difference to your health.

The benefits of quitting increase over time:

- At 2 -12 weeks heart attack risk begins to reduce, circulation and lung function improves, and exercise is easier.
- From 1 to 9 months coughing and shortness of breath decreases.
- At 5 years the risk of oral cancer decreases and the risk of stroke is dramatically reduced.
- Within 15 years the risk of dying from a heart attack is equal to a person who has never smoked.

You can call Quitline, or ask your doctor or dentist about how you can quit smoking.

When to See a Dentist

See a dentist for a check up



Don't wait until it hurts



Good habits like brushing your teeth, drinking tap water and eating healthy foods will help stop you getting problems with your teeth.

Visiting a dentist is also important to keep your teeth healthy.

It is important to see a dentist for a check-up, not just when your teeth begin to hurt.

Your dentist might be able to see something bad before you know it is there.

Even if you think you don't have a problem, the dentist can sometimes see that you have a small problem and can stop it from getting worse.

Most people should have a check-up every year, or more often if your dentist thinks your teeth need to be checked more often.

Many people have things they are afraid of or worry about and some people worry about visiting a dentist.

If you are worried about seeing the dentist, you should tell dentist when you get there.

That way the dentist will be able to help you be less worried.

Dentists understand that you might be worried about visiting them and will try to help you to not be worried.

They can also get help from other health workers to help if you have a really bad fear.

Free Public Dental Care



Some people might be able to get free dental care from a public dental clinic.

You will need to have a Medicare card.

If you are not able to get a Medicare Card, see the Multicultural Health Centre, the Refugee Health Service, Red Cross, or STARTTS, who can help you get dental care.

All children under 18 years of age can get free dental care from the public dental clinic.

Adults who have a Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card or Commonwealth Seniors Health Card from Centrelink can get free dental care from a public dental clinic.

Point to the cards

Any other adults whose name is listed on the Centrelink card are also able to get free dental care.

If you are an adult and don't have one of these cards you will have to go to a private dentist, and you will have to pay.

You can find a private dentist in the Yellow Pages (telephone directory).

You may want to think about getting private health insurance with a dental option as well. Private insurance usually allows you to get free check-ups every year.

How to Get Free Dental Care



To make an appointment for free public dental care you need to call your local public dental service.

The numbers are on the last page of the flip chart - Show the phone number & write up on a board

If your English is good you can directly call the call centre

Point to top part

If you can't speak much English there is a Telephone Interpreting Service, who will help you talk to the person from the dental service.

Point to bottom part

The public dental service is not allowed to use your family or friends to translate for you.

It is very important to use a trained interpreter, as often your family or friends often can not explain fully what the person from the dental service is asking.

You need to tell the call centre staff if you need an interpreter for your appointment

Talking to the Dental Service



- Name?
- Date of birth?
- Language spoken at home?
- How are your teeth?
- How is your health?
- Are you a refugee?



On the phone, the person from the dental service will ask you a lot of questions.

This is to help them understand how quickly you need to see a dentist, and to collect your personal details so that the dental service can contact you if they need to.

The person from the dental service will ask you things like:

- Your family name (or surname)
- Your given name (the name people usually call you)
- When you were born
- What language you speak at home
- Where you were born
- If you have any serious medical conditions
- Questions about your teeth

They will also ask if you have arrived in Australia as a refugee in the last 12 months.

It is important that you tell them if this is the case, as it could mean you get seen a bit quicker.

In New South Wales, public dental service call centres prioritise people for dental care.

The questions that the call centre asks you help the dental service know how bad your dental problem is.

People with the worst dental problems get seen quickest.

The most important part of the priority system is what dental problem you have.

Your social situation – such as if you are a refugee – can give you additional priority but does not put you ahead of people with a more urgent dental problem.

You will also be asked for your Medicare care number and your Centrelink card number, so you need to have these ready when you call.

Dental Appointment Letter



After you have talked to the person from the dental service they might offer you a dental appointment, or the dental service will send you a letter when an appointment is available.

It might take quite a long time for a letter to be sent to you.

There are a lot of people who want to use the public dental service, but not many dentists to see all these people. People might have worse dental problems than yours, even if you think your dental problem is very bad.

How long you have to wait depends on how bad your dental condition is.

The letter that will be sent to you to tell you about your dental appointment will look like this.

Point to the letter

The most important information about your appointment is here.

Point out the red box

It shows the date, time and place of your dental appointment.

If you can't get to the dental appointment time on the letter or that the person on the phone gives you, then you need to tell them or call the dental service.

They will be able to offer you a different appointment time.

If you don't let the dental service know that you can't get to the appointment, and you miss 2 appointments, you will be taken off the waiting list and will have to call the dental service again to make a new appointment.

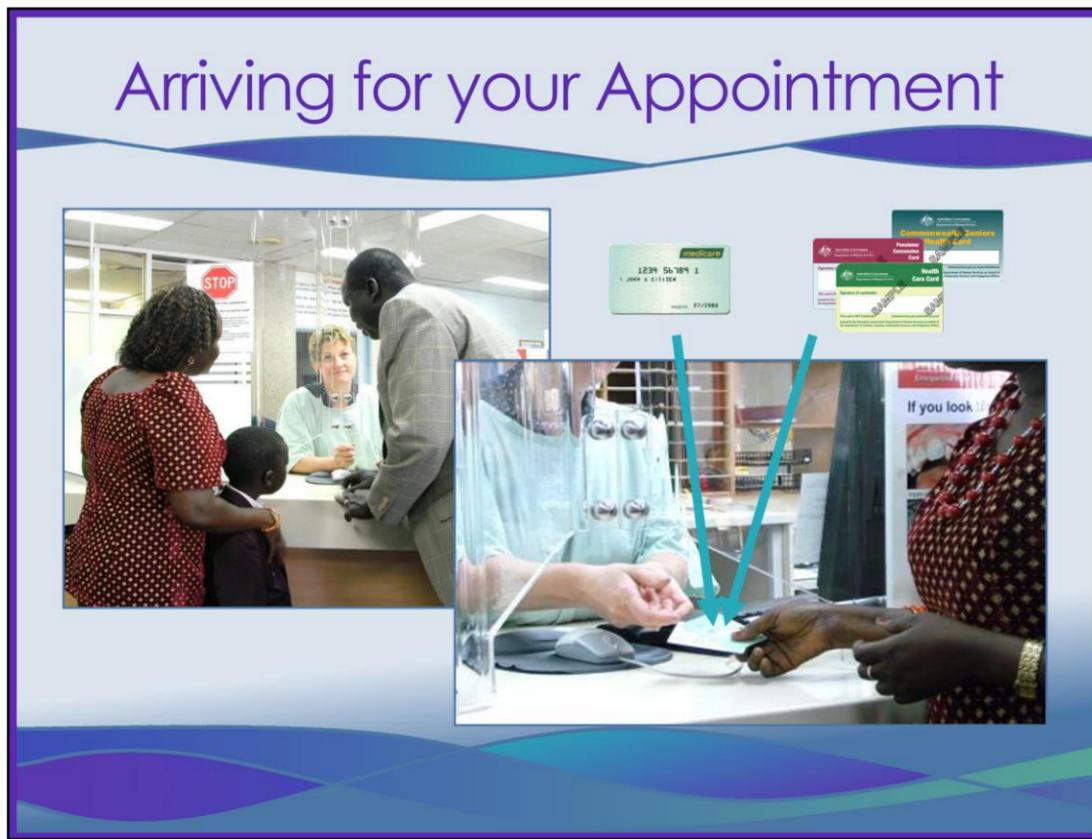
You also need to call the dental service if you move house or change your phone number.

If you move, you may have to go to a closer dental clinic to your new house.

If this is the case, the dental service might tell you to call a different dental service to make an appointment.

Tell the new dental service that you were waiting for another dental service, and they will be able to transfer information about your appointment, and you may not have to wait longer.

Arriving for your Appointment



It is very important that you arrive on time for your appointment – try to arrive 15 minutes early.

If you are late your appointment will be cancelled and you will probably have to come back on another day.

If you keep missing your dental appointments and don't let the dental service know, you may have any further appointments cancelled, and will have to call the dental service again to make another appointment.

If you miss your appointment this means that someone else cannot get their teeth fixed.

If you tell the dental service that you can not make your appointment, they can usually see another person in that appointment time, but when people don't let the dental service know they can't make their appointment, then the time is wasted.

Sometimes it might even be you that gets to see the dentist when someone else can't get to their appointment, but this could never happen if the person didn't let the dental service know.

When you arrive at the clinic you need to talk to the person at the reception desk.

If an interpreter has been arranged for you they will meet you at the dental clinic.

The person at the reception desk will ask for some information such as your name and address, and you will need to show your Medicare card. Adults will need to show their Centrelink card.

First Dental Appointment



When the dentist is ready to see you, you will be shown to the clinic with the interpreter.

If it is your child seeing the dentist, you will need to go with them.

You may have to agree to the dentist fixing your child's teeth.

In the clinic will be a dentist and a dental assistant.

You will be asked to sit in the dental chair, and the dental assistant will ask you to put on some glasses and put a piece of paper on your chest – this is to protect your eyes and clothes from any splashes

The first dental appointment will usually only involve the dentist checking your teeth and taking some x-rays or photos of your teeth.

The dentist may fix a problem if it is urgent.

The dentist will then discuss if any treatment is needed and they will talk to you about what will happen next.

Other Appointments



If the dentist finds a problem with your teeth, they will tell you what needs to be done with the help of the interpreter.

If you have an urgent problem the dentist will arrange for another appointment to be made.

You might need a few more visits to the dental clinic to completely fix the problem.

It is important that you come to all the dental appointments until your dental problem is completely fixed - even if your teeth feel better.

If the problem is not urgent an appointment letter will be sent to you.

If your teeth get worse or start to hurt you before you get a letter, you should call the public dental service and tell them.

Even if your teeth feel better, the problem with your teeth will probably still be there.

Not coming to all your dental appointments might make your dental problem even worse.

If your teeth get worse and you call the dental service and tell them, you might get an earlier appointment.

Before fixing your teeth the dentist will ask you to sign a form that says you agree to have the treatment.

Make sure you understand what the dentist is going to do before you sign this form.

Using the interpreter, ask the dentist to explain more if you don't understand.

You have a right to know what the dentist is going to do.

The public dental service can provide the following dental services:

- Checking of teeth and mouth for problems.
- Fixing any problems using treatment like fillings, taking out teeth that can't be fixed, cleaning teeth and making dentures (false teeth).
- The dentist might also do things to help stop you from getting problems with your teeth, like putting fluoride on your teeth.
- The dentist will also tell you how you can look after your teeth.

Dental Emergency

After hours:
5:00 PM— 8:00 AM Weekdays
OR
Weekends & Public Holidays



Go to your local hospital
 Emergency
Department



It is a dental emergency if you have:

- teeth that have been broken in an accident
- bleeding in the mouth that won't stop
- swelling of your face

If this happens at night between 5PM and 8AM, or on a weekend or public holiday, you should go to the Emergency Department of a hospital.

Some hospitals have a dentist who they can call to provide care.

Remember To...

Eat well



Drink Well



Clean Well



Stay Well



So you can help to keep your teeth health by remembering to:

Eat well and eat less sugary foods

Drink well - Tap water is best.

Clean well by brushing your teeth twice a day, especially before you go to sleep.

And stay well by visiting the dentist for check-ups - Don't wait until you have a problem.

End the presentation by thanking the group and answering questions.

Dental Service Numbers

Local Health District	Phone Number
Brisbane (North and South)	1300 300 850
Cairns	1300 300 850
Gold Coast	1300 300 850 or (07) 5680 9550
Toowoomba	1300 082 662
Townsville	1300 300 850

When you call you will need to have the following handy:

- Full name and Date of birth of patient
- Address and postcode
- Medicare Card number
- Centrelink Health Care card

Use this page when talking about “How to get Free Public Dental Care”

Make sure you know what the local number is in the area where you are presenting.

Point out the local number and/or write on a board if you have one

Dentures (False Teeth)



EXTRA INFORMATION

Even if you have no teeth, it is important to take care of your mouth.

People with no teeth can still get problems in their mouth, and these can still be avoided by taking good care of your mouth.

You need to continue to eat healthy foods and to drink tap water.

Keeping your mouth moist by drinking lots of water helps to make false teeth more comfortable.

Take out your dentures (False teeth) and clean them with a toothbrush, but no toothpaste.

Brush your gums as well.

Dental plaque builds up on the dentures and around the gums.

You need to clean this off your mouth and dentures so your gums don't get damaged.

Toothpaste is too harsh and will damage your dentures. You can use a denture cleaner or hand soap instead.

If you have a partial denture, take it out when you clean your real teeth.

Clean your false teeth over a sink filled with water or with a towel in it, because false teeth can break easily if dropped.

Dentures can break easily, and you need to handle them with care.

You should also try not to put too much pressure on the denture.

Take your dentures out when you go to bed.

This allows the mouth to rest and prevents infection.

You should keep your dentures moist when not being worn by keeping them overnight in a denture solution or in a container of water.

Photo References

Slide	Sources
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2	Istock, http://www.impressiondental.com
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4	http://doktori.mk/files/upload/1925/Dental_Plaque001.jpg , http://www.dentalmentor.com , http://www.edwardbyrne.com/decay.htm
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10	http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/dentalhealth/Pages/Teethcleaningguide.aspx
12	yourhealthblog.net, Australian Government www.health.gov.au , www.examiner.com
13	Istock
16	Australian Government, Dept. of Human Services, http://www.humanservices.gov.au
24	South Australian Dental Service, Better Oral Health in Residential Care resource.