

Final English Script – Oral Health – Introduction and Examination

This script is the English version of a Sango video found online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B3vq8rqny40>

The project was funded by Qld Department of Health and developed by the Refugee Health Network Qld in partnership with the Townsville Oral Health Centre (June, 2019). Thanks to NSW Refugee Health Service NSW refugee health service and Centre for Oral Health Strategy for sharing some of their content and pictures

Introduction to Oral Health

A healthy mouth is important

- It gives us confidence to talk and socialize with others.
- It looks good
- Helps you chew and eat healthy food

Healthy teeth and gums are important for us to maintain a healthy body and healthy mind

- Strong teeth help you to eat healthy foods like fruit, vegetables and meats that help us to have a strong healthy body.
- A strong body means you can fight germs and sickness and stay well
- If your teeth are healthy you will be able to eat, talk and socialise more with friends and family
- This will help keep your mind healthy and happy

Unhealthy teeth and gums

- Can feel sore, 'hurt' and make you feel sick and sad
- Bad teeth and gums don't look good
- Can cause swelling, infections and illnesses in your mouth
- Can feel sore 'hurt'
- This infection can lead to other illnesses in other parts of your body

You can keep your teeth healthy by

- Eating well – Eat more fruit vegetables, meats and grains. Eat less sugary, highly processed and take away foods
- Drink well – Tap water is best. Avoid soft drink, juice and don't add sugar to tea and coffee or milk.
- Clean your teeth well – brush your teeth and gums twice a day, morning and night using a small amount of fluoride toothpaste and clean between your teeth
- Don't smoke – Smoking increases your risk of developing serious teeth and gum problems as well as other illnesses
- Have a dental check-up – The dental professional will make sure that there are no problems with your teeth and gums

Examination/Check-up

During your resettlement in Australia, you have the opportunity to have a full dental check-up to make sure your teeth and gums are healthy. Even if you are not having any problems with your mouth, teeth or gums it is best to have a check-up. This is free through the public dentist (but not at a private dentist).

Sometimes you can have problems with your teeth and gums that you do NOT know about because they are not yet causing you pain. The dental staff will be able to make sure that you are looking after your teeth and gums well, and if there are any problems they can organise to fix them for you.

Sometimes you will have pain in your mouth. It is best to let the dentist know about this pain, where it is and when it occurs, so they can recommend the best treatment that is available.

At the dental clinic, before any treatment is started, the staff will ask you a lot of questions about your health, lifestyle, medications and whether you have any worries about your teeth or gums. These questions are important as sometimes these may affect what types of dental treatments that are best for you. Please bring a written list of any medications that you may be taking. Your doctor should be able to give you this.

The dental staff will use an interpreter to ask these questions and discuss any concerns. You may also be asked to complete this information for your children if you want them to have a check-up at their school. Once the questions have been completed and you have given consent, the dentist will complete a dental examination.

At this examination, there is usually a dentist and a dental assistant.

- They will wear gloves, mask, protective eyewear and a clinical gown
- You will be asked to wear protective glasses and they may place piece of paper on your chest – this is to protect your eyes and clothes from any splashes. These are normal procedures.
- The dental chair will lay back and a special light will be used to shine into your mouth.
- The dentist will use a small mirror and probe to check inside your mouth. They will look at your tongue, cheeks, lips, gums and teeth. The dental assistant will keep a written record of this information.
- This procedure is very simple and does not usually cause any discomfort, however you will need to open your mouth wide, so they can see clearly.

Sometimes dental x-rays or photos will be taken of your teeth, so the dentist can see what is happening in between the teeth or below the gums. This will not hurt but may cause pressure. The dentist will ask you to bite down gently. You must then remain still for the x-ray. The staff will leave the room and you will hear a beeping noise while the x-ray is taken.

Once the examination is complete, the dentist will talk to you about your teeth and gums and discuss any treatments that are recommended. If you agree to having this treatment they will arrange another appointment to get this treatment completed.

In Queensland all new arrivals through the humanitarian program can visit a public dentist for free.

Dental services can be provided at 'private' dental clinics, however you will be required to pay for this service.

Ask your case manager or refugee health nurse for more information. Your TAFE teacher or children's school teacher may also be able to help.

Getting your teeth checked in Townsville

In Townsville free public dental services are available at

- Kirwan Health Campus (photo of building)
- North Ward Health Campus (photo of building)
- and Mobile dental clinics (photo) are available for primary aged school children and for students attending Barrier Reef TAFE for English communication classes services.

If you would like to make an appointment to have a dental check-up, please contact your case worker or refugee health nurse. They will be able to organise the appointment and provide some assistance with getting you to this appointment and facility.