

ORAL HEALTH CARE ADVICE FOR CARERS



LEAFLET 3: INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE FEW TEETH OR WHO WEAR DENTURES

This leaflet has been designed for family carers, residential and nursing staff who support individuals with learning disabilities and/or mental health issues who have lost most or all of their teeth or who wear dentures.

The Importance of Good Oral Health

Good oral health is not just about having an attractive smile. A clean, comfortable mouth is essential for good physical health and general quality of life.

Some individuals may have had many of their teeth removed. This may be due to a history of poor oral care or may be related to health or medication issues.

A number of these individuals may have been fitted with full or partial dentures. Dentures can be very beneficial in terms of appearance, biting, chewing, speech and self-esteem.

The Carer's Role

Carers play a vital role in supporting individuals to maintain good oral health. Individuals without teeth should be given the same oral care as those with teeth. Additional support needs to be provided to those individuals with dentures to ensure the dentures are kept clean and safe. Dentures often go missing when individuals are admitted to hospital.

Oral Health Care Plans

Individuals should have an Oral Health Care Plan, which details the necessary daily care and regular check ups they need.

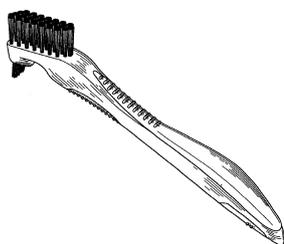
Top Tips for Good Oral Health Care



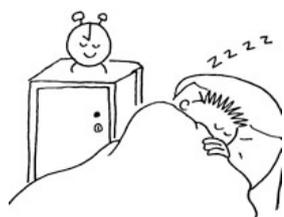
Follow all the general advice given in Leaflet 1 of this series and ensure the individual's remaining teeth and gums are brushed at least twice a day.



Dentures are made to measure and are therefore very expensive. They should be marked with the wearers name and kept safe when not being worn.



Handle dentures carefully as they can break. Brush the dentures with a soft denture brush and denture paste to remove debris and plaque. Hold them over a soft towel or a sink filled with water when you clean them in case you drop them.



Dentures should not be worn at night. Store them in a suitable container marked with the wearer's name. Dentures should be kept moist to prevent them drying out and cracking. Ask the dentist for specific advice about night-time storage as this may vary with the denture type.



Make sure the individual's mouth is clear of food debris once dentures are removed and especially before they are put in.



Ensure the individual sees the dentist regularly as dentures can become loose over time. Poorly fitting dentures can cause discomfort and sores as well as making eating and speaking difficult.

If you notice any changes in the individual's mouth or they appear to be in pain always seek professional advice from the dentist.

Other Sources of Advice:

Bexley and Greenwich Primary Dental Care Service: **0208 859 7236**

Bromley PCT Special Care Dental Service:
01689 853339

Bexley Primary Care Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS): **0800 328 9712**

Greenwich Primary Care Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS): **0800 169 9928**

Bromley Primary Care Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS): **0800 389 5118**

Oxleas Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS):
0800 917 7159

NHS Direct: **0845 4647**

British Society for Disability and Oral Health www.bsdh.org.uk - guidance on specific patient groups.

Oxleas ALD Speech and Language Therapy Services:

Bexley **0208 269 3300**

Greenwich **0208 921 4881**

Bromley **01689 853388**

The Dry Mouth Information Centre: www.biotene.co.uk/biotene

Other Oral Health Care leaflets available locally:

- Leaflet 1 – General Advice
- Leaflet 2 – Individuals with swallowing problems

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