



Oral Care for Recovery

Your oral health needs are unique and a combination of many factors including your genetics, home care, immune system, nutrition, fluid, hormones and overall health.

Disordered eating behaviors including inadequate or irregular food and fluid intake as well as vomiting can also impact your oral health. Common oral symptoms from disordered eating behaviors can include dry mouth (which can lead to tooth decay), enamel erosion and tooth hypersensitivity.

As you are working toward recovery, consider the following strategies to protect your mouth, teeth and gums:

- Work with a registered dietitian to support you in feeding yourself a nutrition recovery plan that includes adequate amounts of energy, fluid, as well as vitamins and minerals.
- Find a dentist and hygienist that you feel comfortable sharing openly with as members of your recovery team. If you have had a bad experience before, get support from your mental health provider on strategies for managing fear, anxiety or sensory discomfort (lights, sounds, feelings).
- If you are struggling with vomiting behaviors, do not brush your teeth after vomiting to avoid enamel erosion. Talk to your dentist about protective home care strategies such as topical fluoride treatments, bicarbonate mouth rinses, and mouth guards.
- Aim to eat and drink all food and fluids with nutrition within 30-45 minutes and not more than six times a day. Drink adequate water during, after and in between eating times to rinse your teeth and gums. Talk to your dentist about other home care strategies to protect your teeth.