



Australian Government

Department of Health and Aged Care

Caring for your teeth

Health Fact Sheet



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Dental care

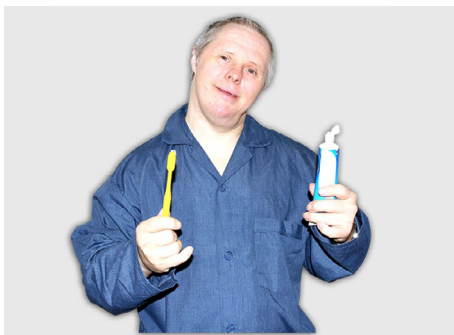


Dental care is very important.

Dental care means caring for your teeth.



People with intellectual disability can have more teeth problems than other people.



This fact sheet tells you about how to care for your teeth.

It tells you about cleaning your teeth.



It tells you about the **dentist**.

A **dentist** is a health worker who looks after teeth.

Caring for your teeth



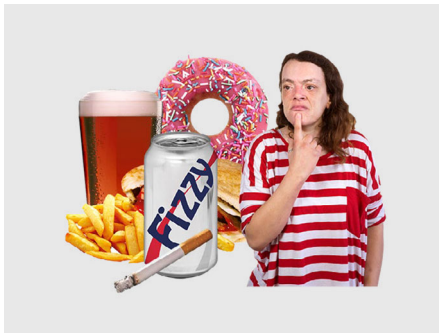
It is important to take care of your teeth.

Dental problems can cause other health problems.



Some things that cause teeth problems are

- Food stuck on teeth
- Dry mouth
- Stomach problems



Food on your teeth can make them rot.

Sugar is very bad for your teeth.



Drinking water after eating or drinking sweet things helps.



Clean your teeth 2 times a day to get rid of food.

Brush your teeth.

Use dental floss between your teeth.

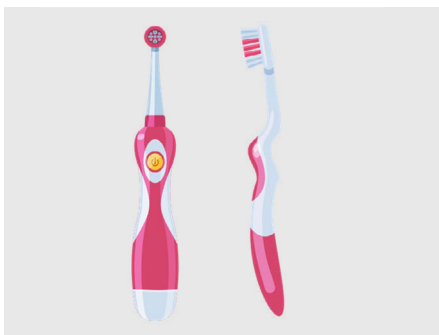


Some people find it hard to brush their teeth.



Some people do not like toothpaste. They do not like the taste or foam.

You can get toothpaste with no taste or foam.



Some people find a toothbrush hard to use.

You can try an electric toothbrush.

You can try a toothbrush with a special handle or brush.

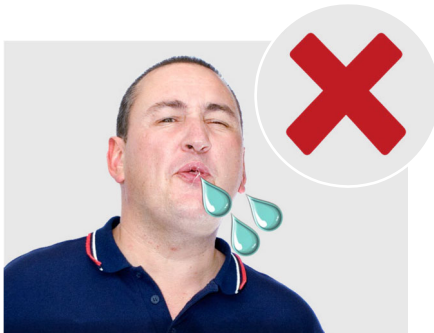


Saliva is good for your teeth.

Saliva is also known as spit.



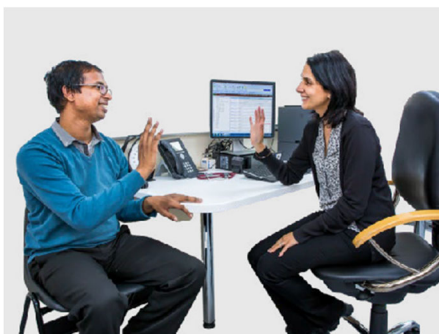
Drinking lots of water helps make saliva.



Some people have **dry mouth**.

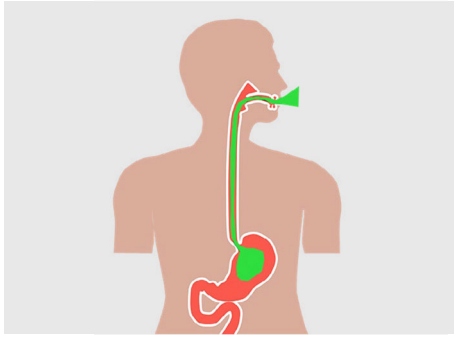
Dry mouth is when you do not have enough saliva.

Some medicines can cause dry mouth.



Talk to your doctor if you have dry mouth.

There are medicines that can help.



Stomach problems can cause teeth problems.

Reflux is a stomach problem.

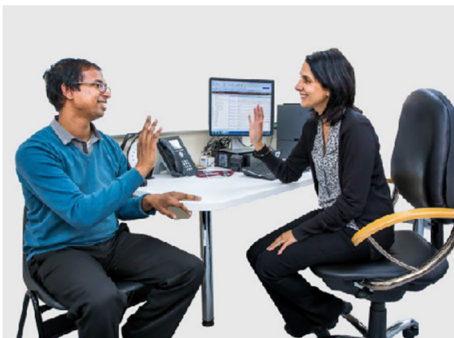
Reflux is when your stomach acid comes back up.



The stomach acid can damage your teeth.

It can be hard to fix the damage.

It can cost a lot of money.



It is important to treat reflux early.

This can stop it damaging your teeth.

Your doctor can help you with this.

Going to the dentist



A dentist can check your teeth.



Dentists can help with things like

- Tooth pain
- Gum pain
- Cleaning teeth



Some people need extra help with brushing.

Your dentist can show you how to brush well.

They can tell you things to make it easier.



It is good to go to the dentist every 6 months.

Types of dentists



Some dentists are **public**.

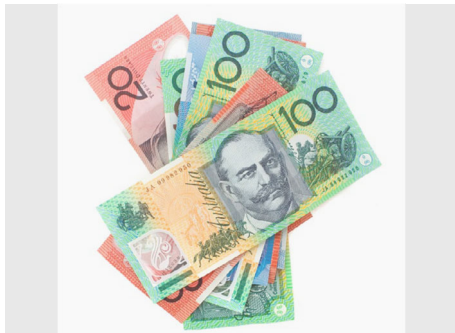
Public means you do not have to pay.

There can be long waits for public dentists.



Only some people can see public dentists.

The rules are different in each state or territory.



Some dentists are **private**.

Private means you have to pay.



Ask how much it will cost before you go.



Some dentists are **special care dentists**.

Special care dentists are dentists who work with people who need extra help.



They can work in different ways. This can make dental care easier.



Special care dentists can be public or private.



Call **HealthDirect** to find a dentist. Tell them what type of dentist you want to see.

Call **1800 022 222**

Summary



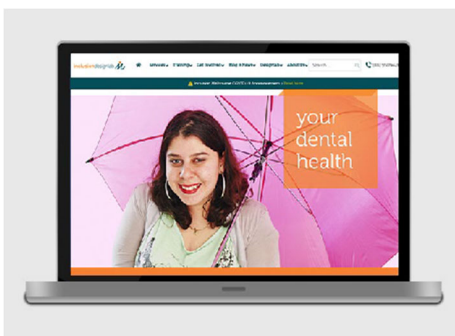
It is important to take care of your teeth.



There are things you can do to keep your teeth healthy.



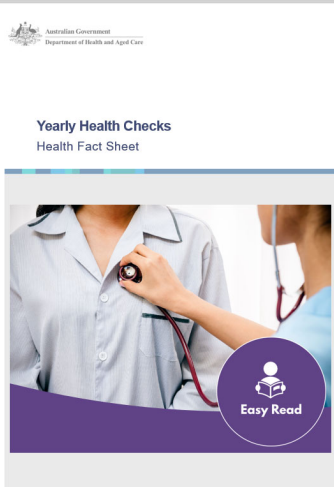
There are things your dentist can help you with.



There is more information on dental care here

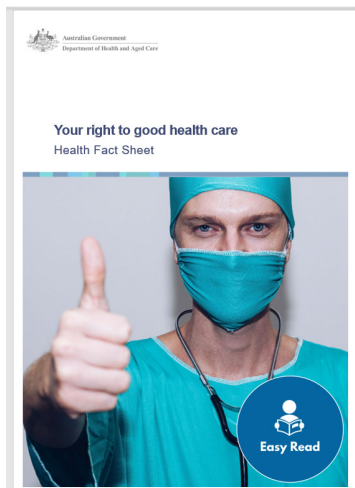
www.inclusionmelbourne.org.au/projects/your-dental-health

Health fact sheets



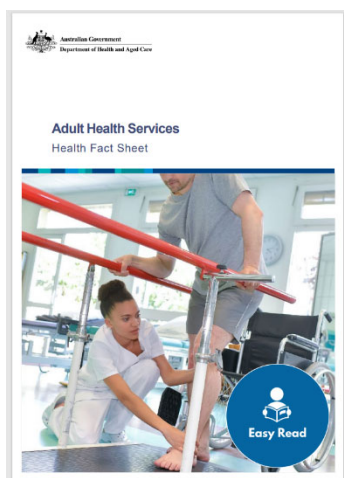
We have info about **yearly health checks** here.

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/yearly-health-checks-easy-read?language=en>



We have info about **your right to good health care** here.

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/your-right-to-good-health-care-easy-read?language=en>

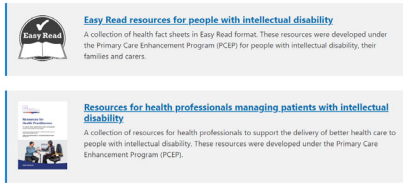


We have info about **adult health services** here.

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/adult-health-services-easy-read?language=en>

There are other health fact sheets and resources for health professionals managing patients with intellectual disability here.

Resources



<https://www.health.gov.au/our-work/primary-care-enhancement-program-for-people-with-intellectual-disability>

Health.gov.au

All information in this publication is correct as at July 2023.

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