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Dry Mouth & Gum Health Daily Checklist

A simple daily routine to protect teeth and gums, based on ADA guidance, plus a tracker to bring to your dentist.

Your daily routine

- ☐ Brush for two minutes in the morning with fluoride toothpaste
- ☐ Brush for two minutes in the evening with fluoride toothpaste
- ☐ Clean between your teeth once a day (floss or interdental brushes)
- ☐ Use a soft-bristled brush and gentle pressure
- ☐ Rinse or sip water after meals and snacks
- ☐ Avoid tobacco and smokeless tobacco
- ☐ Clean dentures or removable appliances thoroughly every day

If your mouth feels dry

Saliva neutralizes acids, washes away food and helps protect teeth. The ADA notes that without enough saliva, extensive tooth decay can occur. Dry mouth is usually a symptom or a medication side effect.

- ☐ Ask your dentist about ways to restore moisture
- ☐ Chew sugar-free gum or candy to stimulate saliva
- ☐ Try artificial saliva or oral rinses; look for the ADA Seal
- ☐ Mention all medications to your dentist and doctor (never stop one on your own)

Watch for: constant sore throat, burning in the mouth, trouble speaking or swallowing, hoarseness. Tell your dentist or doctor.

Plaque and tartar

- Plaque is a sticky bacterial film. After sugar, it makes acid that attacks enamel.
- If plaque is not removed daily, it hardens into tartar (calculus).
- Tartar above the gum line can make gums swell and bleed: early gum disease (gingivitis).

Plaque-control habits

- ☐ Pay extra attention to the gum line and back teeth
- ☐ Do not scrape tartar yourself with sharp tools
- ☐ Book regular cleanings; ask how often you should go

Diabetes and your mouth

- The ADA says diabetes often leads to gum disease (nearly 22% of people with type 1 or type 2 diabetes).
 - Serious gum disease can make blood sugar harder to control; treating it may help.
 - Dry mouth is common and raises the risk of decay.
- ☐ Tell your dentist you have diabetes
 - ☐ Take medications as directed; stay active and eat a healthy diet
 - ☐ Treat dental visits as a priority

Home remedies: oil pulling

The ADA says there are no reliable scientific studies showing oil pulling reduces cavities, whitens teeth or improves oral health, and does not recommend it as a hygiene practice. If you try it, treat it as an extra, never a replacement.

7-day gum and dry-mouth tracker

Day	AM brush	PM brush	Cleaned between teeth	Dry mouth (0-5)	Gums bleed?
Day 1					
Day 2					
Day 3					
Day 4					
Day 5					
Day 6					
Day 7					

Bring to your dentist:

- List of medications and supplements
- Notes from this tracker
- Questions: how often should I have cleanings? Do I need a special rinse or toothpaste?

Sources and next steps

- American Dental Association, MouthHealthy: Dry Mouth
- American Dental Association, MouthHealthy: Plaque
- American Dental Association, MouthHealthy: Diabetes
- American Dental Association, MouthHealthy: Oil Pulling

Next step: book a dental check-up if you have pain, bleeding gums, a suspected cavity or any question this checklist does not answer. Dentists can tailor advice to your mouth, your health and your age.

Last updated: October 2026. Guidance changes over time; check with your dentist and the organizations named above.