

# Dental Care for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)

## Tips to help them have a healthy mouth:



**It may take time for a person with a disability to feel relaxed at the dentist.** New patients should explain their medical problems to the dentist and ask for a “get to know” visit. Then, the person meets the dentist, sits in the dental chair, looks at the dental tools and hears what happens during the exam.



**Take the person’s medical history with you and a list of all drugs.** Tell the dentist about good and bad things that happened at other dental visits. And remember to take the person’s ID card with you.



**At home, brush and floss every day at the same time of the day in the same location.** Explain each step of brushing and flossing before you do it. Show them how you brush and floss so the person can see how it is done. Play music or let the person hold a favorite toy to help them relax.



**A power toothbrush may be easier to use if the noise and feeling do not bother the person.** Toothpaste bothers some people who have swallowing problems so just use water. For people who can’t rinse after brushing, give them a drink of water or wipe their mouth with a finger wrapped in gauze.



**Try different kinds of floss to find which one the person likes.** It might help to use a floss holder or a power flosser. It’s usually easier to sit or stand behind the person while brushing and flossing.

Source and website:

*Tips for treating patients with intellectual and developmental disabilities.*  
Registered Dental Hygienists (RDH), [www.rdhmag.com](http://www.rdhmag.com)

This information is not meant to replace medical or dental care.  
Please always follow your healthcare provider’s instructions.

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