

Health Net Cal MediConnect Plan (Medicare-Medicaid Plan)

Taking Care of **Your Teeth** *Is Good for* **Your Total Health**

To make sure you have good total health throughout your life, it is important to practice good oral health.

Older adults have a greater chance of getting gum disease, also called “periodontitis.” People with gum disease are at risk for:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Lung infections, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and pneumonia

Gum disease is caused by plaque, a thin film of bacteria that grows on your teeth. Gum disease may also lead to tooth decay.



If you practice good oral health habits, your teeth can last a lifetime. To prevent plaque, you should:

- brush and floss your teeth morning and night;
- eat a healthy diet, and;
- visit your dentist for regular checkups and cleanings.

Certain medical conditions, such as arthritis in the hands and fingers, may make brushing or flossing teeth hard to do. Ask your dentist to suggest cleaning tools to get the job done.

Cal MediConnect Members:

To learn more, call the Health Education Information Line at **1-800-804-6074 (TTY 711)**.

To speak with a nurse about your health or to learn more about online wellness programs, call the Member Services number on the back of your ID card or visit **www.healthnet.com/calmediconnect**.



Denture care

Proper denture care is good for both your dentures and oral health. Here are some tips:

Hold your dentures with care

Stand over a towel or a sink full of water when holding your dentures. This will keep them from breaking when dropping in the sink or to the ground.

Brush and rinse your dentures daily

Brush dentures daily to clean food, plaque and stains. Always use a soft toothbrush to clean your dentures. Rinse your dentures after every meal. Use denture toothpaste, baking soda or mild liquid soap to clean your dentures. Do not use household cleansers or regular toothpaste as they may be too harsh. Do not use bleach, as this may whiten the pink portion of the denture.



See your dentist if your dentures become loose or they do not fit properly.

Wear your dentures

You may need to use products to keep your dentures in place. These products come in many forms: creams, powders, strips, or liquids. If you use these products, be sure to use them exactly as directed. Your dentist can suggest some products for you.

Take care of your dentures when not in use

To prevent your dentures from becoming dry or losing shape, soak them in denture cleansing liquid or water. Never soak your dentures in hot water as they may lose their shape.

If your dentures have metal parts, they should only be soaked in water. Denture cleansing liquid may change the color of the metal.



This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Please always follow your health care provider's instructions. Programs and services are subject to change.

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