



# TeenCare

LIBERTY cares about more than just teeth!

## 5 Healthy Habits for Teens

**1** Food debris left on your teeth encourages bad bacteria growth that eats away at enamel and causes cavities. This is why it's important to have a steady, consistent oral health routine. The American Dental Association (ADA) recommends teens brush twice per day, for two minutes at a time, and floss once per day to clean debris from the hard-to-reach areas of your teeth. A proper oral health routine is the best way to keep a mouth clean and prevents future issues.

Follow an oral health routine

Drink more water

**2** Water is a fantastic tool in the fight against bad bacteria and tooth decay. Water is not acidic and does not harm teeth at all. In fact, it improves saliva production, which naturally cleans teeth of debris and restores the mouth back to a healthy pH balance. Try drinking more water instead of sugary drinks to help keep your teeth strong and healthy. If you must have juice or a sweeter drink, water it down so that you aren't consuming too much sugar at one time.

Eat a healthy diet

**3** A healthy diet is critical to getting a healthy mouth. Mouth-healthy foods like fruit, vegetables, nuts and calcium-rich items can all strengthen teeth. When buying fruit and vegetables, make sure that you purchase them in their full-forms, and that you don't buy fruit packaged in sugary syrup. Try adding fibrous vegetables like celery, spinach or carrots to your diet, since fibrous food naturally scrubs teeth clean of food debris and combats bad bacteria buildup.



Stay healthy all year

**4** One of the best ways to keep your oral health in order is by scheduling an appointment with your dental office every six months for a routine oral checkup and cleaning. The holidays are the perfect time for an appointment since most teens have an extended break from school.

**Visit your dentist 2x a year**

**5** It can be difficult to know when to replace your toothbrush with a new one. There are some signs that indicate it's time for a change. If your toothbrush bristles are frayed, or pluming outward, then it's time for a new toothbrush. If you recently had an illness, then it's best to replace your toothbrush to prevent the spread of unhealthy bacteria. Finally, a good rule of thumb to follow is to replace your toothbrush after 3 months of use.

**Replace your toothbrush every 3 months**

