



Oral Care

Oral and dental diseases can be a contributing factor to pneumonia as the levels of bacteria in the mouth and saliva are increased. If saliva or food/fluid contains these bacteria and enters the lungs (aspiration), it can increase the risk and severity of chest infections.

Is oral care for everyone?

Yes. Each individual should have a plan for oral care including anyone without teeth and even those who do not eat/drink orally (ie are tube fed).

Why is oral care important?

- clears food residues
- reduces risk of infection
- maintains comfort and moisture of mouth
- prevents bad breath
- prevents tooth decay



How often?

- Two – three times a day

Equipment that can assist with oral care:

- Soft toothbrush or foam swab
- Dry clean towel or facecloth
- Lubrication for the mouth eg KY jelly
- Lip moisturiser or balm if required (NB these should not be used for continuous periods as they can reduce moisture in the lips).
- Water and/or mouthwash should be used with caution and will depend on both the individual's oral control and swallow safety.

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