

Oral Care - Introduction

Huddle Talk #1

Did you know?

- 90% of LTC Residents still have their natural teeth.
- 75% of LTC Residents require assistance with brushing.

Poor Oral Health will significantly affect a resident's quality of life:

- Bad breath
- Bleeding gums
- Speech and swallowing
- Ability to eat, nutritional status and weight loss
- Pain and discomfort

Oral health is as important as skin integrity in protecting the body against infection. When this defense barrier is broken because of poor oral health, the bacteria in dental plaque can enter airways and the bloodstream causing:

- Pneumonia
- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Lowered immunity
- Poor diabetic control

Special Concerns in the Elderly

- Decreased saliva/dry mouth due to medications
- Medications are often given with sweet, sticky foods (jam, applesauce)
- Cognitive challenges
- "Out of sight, out of mind" teeth are not as visible as skin or hair

