Cleaning the mouth, teeth and dentures (oral care) is part of personal care. Everybody should clean their teeth or dentures at least twice a day. Cleaning the mouth, teeth or dentures helps make sure older people:
• are comfortable
• are able to eat, drink and talk
• are free from pain
• feel better about themselves.
Encourage and assist older people to clean their own teeth or dentures. If they are not able to do this, then you can help them.

But first follow the code:

Speak to your line manager to report a concern or if you:
• feel the older person needs to see a dentist or
• feel the older person is too unwell for you to care for their mouth or
• feel there are any other problems in keeping the older person’s mouth and teeth clean.

Respect the person’s privacy and dignity and make sure they are comfortable

Wash your hands and wear disposable gloves

Explain and show what you are about to do

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People with **natural teeth**

1. Use a pea-sized amount of adult fluoride toothpaste.
2. Brush teeth and gums (continue even if gums bleed slightly).
3. Encourage to spit but not rinse. Wipe face.
4. Rinse toothbrush after brushing.

People with **dentures**

1. At night, remove dentures from mouth.
2. Brush using a toothbrush and unperfumed soap or denture cream.
3. Soak the dentures in sterilising fluid for at least 20 minutes.
4. Then soak overnight in cold water.

People with **no natural teeth**

1. Use a wet piece of gauze to gently clean gums and tongue.

**Dentures should be rinsed after every meal**

**Remember, the inside of the mouth still needs to be cleaned**

Encourage older people to clean their own teeth. Every time you clean a person’s mouth, write it down.

If a person won’t let you near their mouth, try again later – don’t give up.

Look in the mouth for any problems and write them down in the care plan.

**Natural teeth should be cleaned at least twice a day**
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