**Bringing World Oral Health Day into the workplace**

The importance of good oral health shouldn’t be overlooked. Practicing good oral hygiene means lots more than just having clean teeth. It also contributes to overall wellbeing and happiness.

Oral diseases can often be painful and burdening, leading to more serious health conditions if left untreated. This doesn’t have to be the case though, with most conditions being largely preventable and easily treatable if caught early.

World Oral Health Day aims to empower people with the tools, skills and knowledge to secure good oral health. And, by championing healthy mouths, help prevent oral disease and mitigate future health issues.

**At <insert company name>, your health and wellbeing are important to us. In this article, you’ll find handy tips, resources and advice to help you and your family take control of your oral health and be proud of your mouths.**

**Signs of poor oral health**

Most people will suffer from a dental problem at some point. Look out for these common signs that tell you something isn’t quite right with your mouth.

**Toothache**

[Throbbing pain](https://www.bupa.co.uk/dental/dental-care/symptoms/toothache), swelling or sharp pains when eating and drinking, are all signs of a bigger problem that could worsen if left untreated.

**Abscesses**

[Abscesses](https://www.bupa.co.uk/dental/dental-care/symptoms/abscesses) can look like a sore when visible but can also be hidden within a tooth itself or even the jaw. They are often the result of a bacterial infection and need to be seen to by a dentist as soon as possible.

**Jaw pain**

Temporomandibular disorder (TMJ) is the name given to conditions which affect the jaw joint. Popping and clicking sounds, difficulty chewing, and pain around the cheek, ear, neck and shoulders, all could be [signs of TMJ](https://www.bupa.co.uk/dental/dental-care/symptoms/tmj-dysfunction).

**Bleeding gums**

Bleeding gums is a common symptom of [gum disease](https://www.bupa.co.uk/dental/dental-care/treatments/gum-disease). Gum disease isn’t always painful, so you may not realise you have it. If left untreated, gum disease can lead to gum recession and even tooth loss.

**Bad breath**

It’s normal to have the odd spell of bad breath – when you’ve eaten strong smelling foods for example. If you find you have [bad breath frequently](https://www.bupa.co.uk/dental/dental-care/symptoms/bad-breath) though, it could mean you’re not cleaning the whole of your mouth properly or something more serious, like an infection.

**Practicing good oral hygiene**

The simple things you can do to make sure you’re taking care of your mouth.

**Brush regularly**

Brush your teeth before bed and at least once more during the day – brush for about two minutes and don’t forget to gently brush your tongue as well. Make sure to use a fluoride toothpaste and use floss to clean hard to reach areas in between your teeth. Using a mouthwash in between brushing can also protect your teeth and gums for longer.

**Eat well**

Cutting down on sugary drinks and foods is a great way to protect your teeth and gums from decay and disease. Swap out fizzy drinks for water or sugar free squash. If you do drink a fizzy drink, use a straw to reduce the contact with your teeth. If you smoke, [quitting smoking](https://www.bupa.co.uk/dental/dental-care/news/effects-of-smoking-on-your-oral-health) is the best thing you can do to protect your mouth from nasty diseases, tooth loss and mouth cancer.

**Visit your dentist**

Your dentist will tell you how often you should be visiting them for a check-up, but a good starting point is twice yearly, or every six months. Visiting your dentist regularly is the best way to make sure you don’t have any problems, and if you do, make sure they don’t go untreated. Problems can quickly turn into more serious issues later on if left alone.

**Looking after children’s oral health**

Your tots’ baby teeth start making their appearance around their first birthday. It’s important you lay the foundations of good dental habits so they’re more likely to stick.

**A positive dental attitude**

Try to be as positive as you can when visiting the dentist – if you’re anxious, they will be too. A reward system like a sticker chart can give little ones something to aim for and [make the experience a little less scary](https://www.bupa.co.uk/dental/dental-care/services/parents-and-children/blog/childs-first-dental-visit). Positive reinforcement is also a great way to encourage good behaviour for things like brushing their teeth for two minutes.

**Make it fun**

Brushing their teeth doesn’t have to be a chore. Whilst they might not be ready to brush unsupervised until the age of 7, games can be a great way to make teeth cleaning more fun and give them a sense of independence.

**Smart swaps**

Tots love to have a sweet tooth. A little sugar is fine in moderation, but by [swapping out sweet treats](https://www.bupa.co.uk/dental/dental-care/services/parents-and-children/blog/smart-sugar-swaps-kids) for something healthier, you can cut down the chances of them developing harmful cavities. For example, swap out sugar-filled breakfast cereal for tasty porridge oats with a little fruit on top.

For more advice, tips and support on keeping your mouth healthy and practicing good oral hygiene, you can visit [Bupa’s website](https://www.bupa.co.uk/dental/dental-care/symptoms). If you’re an insured member, you can also call Bupa’s Dental Care support line on **0808 163 7731** if you’re worried about any symptoms or just want some advice.

**Sources:**

<https://www.dentalhealth.org/>

<https://www.worldoralhealthday.org>

<https://www.bupa.co.uk/dental/dental-care/symptoms>

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