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# CHW ORAL HEALTH WORKSHOP

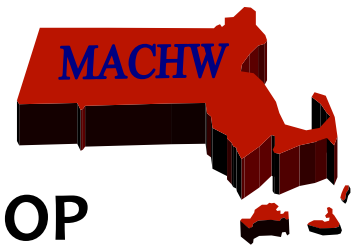
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**Developed by:**

CHW Oral Health Advisory Council of  
Massachusetts Association of Community Health  
Workers

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# CHW ORAL HEALTH WORKSHOP

## General Oral Health Knowledge

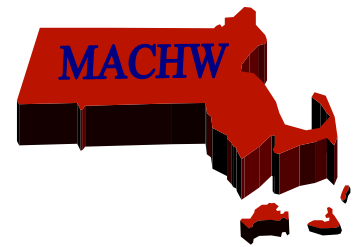
- **Everyone should....**
  - *understand that oral health is related to overall health*
  - *use a fluoride based toothpaste everyday*
  - *know the risk factors for early childhood caries*

## Navigation of the Oral Health System

- *visit a dentist at least once a year*
- *know how to schedule a dental appointment*
- *understand dental insurance basics*
- *know what to expect when going to see a dentist*

## Oral Care for Specific Populations

- **All children should....**
  - *go to the dentist for their first examination no later than the age of 3*
  - *participate in school based oral health programs*
- **Information for specific populations:**
  - *Elderly*
  - *People without teeth*
  - *People with physical disabilities*
  - *Persons with developmental or intellectual disabilities*
  - *Pregnancy*
  - *People with diabetes*
- **Additional Information**



## General Oral Health Knowledge

- **Everyone should...**
  - *understand that oral health is related to overall health*
  - *use a fluoride based toothpaste everyday*
  - *know the risk factors for early childhood caries*



## ***Oral health is related to overall health***

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- Oral health affects people physically and mentally by influencing how they grow, look, speak, chew, taste food and socialize, as well as affecting their feelings of social well-being.<sup>1</sup>
- Scientists have found links between oral diseases and the following chronic diseases:
  - **Cardiovascular diseases**- Heart Disease is the #1 cause of death in the U.S. and evidence suggests that bacteria in the mouth from gum disease may cause inflammation and block the flow of blood to the heart and brain. Over time this could result in a heart attack or a stroke.<sup>2</sup>
  - **Cancer**- oral cancer has been found in patients that use tobacco products
  - **Diabetes**- swelling in the mouth along with reduced blood flow can lead to periodontal (gum) disease
  - **Chronic respiratory diseases**
- Dental professionals may be the first to discover the signs chronic diseases through oral examinations and can recommend further medical assessment.
- ***The most common oral diseases are the following:***
  - Dental cavities<sup>3</sup>
  - Periodontal (gum) disease<sup>4</sup>

## ***Poor lifestyle decisions can increase the risk of oral disease and chronic disease, so limit the following:***

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- Foods with excess fat and sugar
- Tobacco use
- Alcohol use

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<sup>1</sup> Sheiham, Aubrey. Bulletin of the World Health Organization. Editorial. *Oral Health, General Health and Quality of Life*. 83 (9). September 2005. Retrieved from <http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/83/9/644.pdf> , June 2009.

<sup>2</sup> "The Significance of Periodontal Infection In Cardiology"; Grand Rounds in Oral –Systemic Medicine

<sup>3</sup> Refer to Additional Information- Tooth Decay

<sup>4</sup> Refer to Additional Information- Periodontal Disease



## ***Use fluoride based toothpaste everyday***

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- Use of a pea-sized amount twice per day requires approximately two tubes of toothpaste per year
- Fluoride is the only toothpaste additive proven to prevent tooth decay (cavities)<sup>5</sup>
- Persons who brush and use toothpaste regularly to maintain their oral health see preventative benefits compared to persons that do not brush regularly
- Estimated annual cost of toothpaste is \$12-\$18<sup>6</sup>

## **Selecting the Right Toothpaste<sup>7</sup>**

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- The American Dental Association puts its seal of approval on toothbrushes, toothpaste, along with other products that their experts have shown to be safe and helpful.
- This seal, on one of the corners of the box, will signify that the toothpaste contains safe fluoride levels.



## **Selecting the Right Toothbrush<sup>8</sup>**

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- Look for the ADA seal of approval on the toothbrush packaging
- Rinse the toothbrush with tap water after brushing to remove any remaining toothpaste
- Store it in an upright position allowing it to air dry<sup>9</sup>
- Do not routinely cover toothbrushes as that may cause the toothbrush to become dirty
- Keep brushes separated
- Replace toothbrush every 3-4 months or when bristles become frayed or worn
- Children's brushes may need to be replaced more frequently



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<sup>5</sup> Refer to Additional Information- Tooth Decay

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.ada.org/public/topics/cleaning.asp>

<sup>7</sup> Image reference: <http://www.ada.org/ada/seal/index.asp>

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.ada.org/prof/resources/pubs/jada/patient/patient\\_78.pdf](http://www.ada.org/prof/resources/pubs/jada/patient/patient_78.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Image reference: [http://www.listicles.com/wp-content/upload/2933/B\\_AC\\_BHC\\_ToothbrushHolderSTST\\_877.jpg](http://www.listicles.com/wp-content/upload/2933/B_AC_BHC_ToothbrushHolderSTST_877.jpg)

# Risk factors for early childhood caries (also known as Bottle Rot)

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## Causes

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- Early childhood caries or cavities (decay<sup>10</sup>) can be caused by prolonged contact with a bottle that contains any liquid other than water<sup>11</sup>
- As soon as teeth begin to appear, children are at risk for decay
- Decay can lead to loss of teeth and eventually to problems with adult teeth<sup>12</sup>



Mild Decay



Moderate Decay



Severe Decay<sup>13</sup>

## Prevention

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- Parents should take their children to the dentist after their first tooth has come in (6-12 months of age)
- Parents need to speak with a dentist about the benefits of fluoride varnish<sup>14</sup> and enrolling their child in an anticipatory guidance<sup>15</sup> program
- The transfer of food or objects from the adult mouth to the child's mouth should never occur
- Never put an infant to sleep with a bottle other than water
- Give bottles to the child only during meal time
- Avoid late evening breast feeding after the first tooth erupts
- Have children drink from a cup as they approach their first birthday

## Oral Hygiene for Children

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- Brushing the baby's teeth after eating improves their oral health
- Use a soft bristled toothbrush
- Gently brush the child's mouth area
- Use water only until the child's dentist advises to use toothpaste

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<sup>10</sup> Refer to Additional Information- Tooth Decay

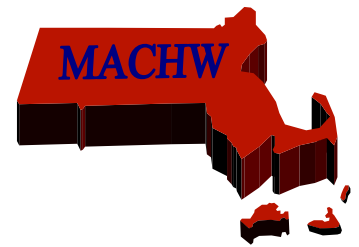
<sup>11</sup> A Healthy Mouth for your Baby. NIDCR. [www.nidcr.nih.gov](http://www.nidcr.nih.gov)

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.ada.org/public/topics/decay\\_childhood.asp](http://www.ada.org/public/topics/decay_childhood.asp)

<sup>13</sup> Image reference: [http://www.ada.org/public/topics/decay\\_childhood.asp](http://www.ada.org/public/topics/decay_childhood.asp)

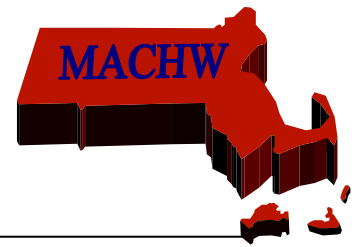
<sup>14</sup> Refer to Additional Information- Fluoride Varnish

<sup>15</sup> Anticipatory guidance- a proactive developmentally based counseling technique that focuses on the needs of a child at each stage of life.



## **Navigation of the Oral Health System**

- *visit a dentist at least once a year*
- *know how to schedule a dental appointment*
- *understand dental insurance basics*
- *know what to expect when going to see a dentist*



## ***Visit a dentist at least once a year***

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### **Why visit the dentist at least once a year?**

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- 1.) Most oral diseases are preventable
- 2.) Prevention of oral health issues provides overall health benefits
- 3.) Oral health related pain can negatively effect daily routines
- 4.) Brushing and flossing<sup>16</sup> alone cannot prevent all oral health problems
- 5.) Even if the patient has no insurance, paying for cleanings can prevent expensive problems down the road

### **Safe, simple and painless procedures performed by a dentist can prevent disease:**

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- 1.) Routine cleanings can prevent decay<sup>17</sup>
- 2.) Fluoride treatments prevent tooth decay
- 3.) Dental sealants or plastic coatings can be applied to the teeth which prevent decay

### **Visiting the dentist and insurance**

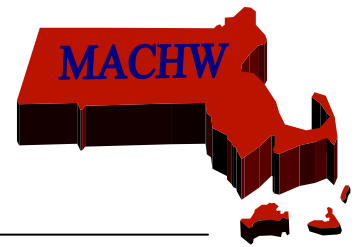
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- 1.) Check with the insurance company prior to the appointment to see what is covered
- 2.) Patients must ask if the dental office accepts their insurance prior to the dental visit

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<sup>16</sup> Refer to Additional Information- Fluoride Varnish

<sup>17</sup> Refer to Additional Information- Dental Cavities



## ***How to schedule a dental appointment***

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### **What to consider before making an appointment:**

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- Prepare a list of possible dates and times for the appointment
- Allow a large block of time for the appointment which includes transportation time and time spent in the examination
- Research dental insurance coverage prior to the appointment, most plans cover 2 routine check-ups per year

### **When making the appointment:**

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- Calling the dental office is the most preferred method of scheduling
- Be sure to have a list of potential dates and insurance card ready
- Patients should find a dental office that accepts their insurance plan prior to scheduling an appointment
- Ask these questions while on the phone:
  - *Do I want to receive a cleaning, if so, ask if the hygienist will be in the office?*
  - *What cards or documents do I need to bring to the appointment?*

### **Getting to the Appointment:**

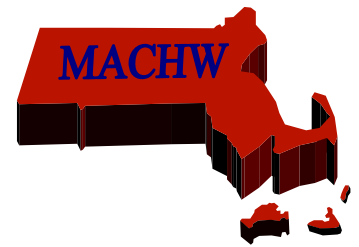
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- Transportation- ask CHW for vouchers for public transportation
- Be early for the first appointment- this will ensure that any paperwork that needs to be completed can be completed prior to the appointment

### **Cancelling/missing appointment:**

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- If the appointment has to be cancelled:
  - Call as early as possible
  - Schedule another appointment at that time
- If the patient is late or an appointment is missed completely:
  - Some dental offices may not be able to fit the patient into the schedule
  - Dentists will likely not want to schedule the patient for another appointment



## **Dental insurance Basics**

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### **Dental Insurance Options**

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- 1.) Employer based coverage
- 2.) Private coverage
- 3.) MassHealth dental
- 4.) Medicare
- 5.) SCHIP

### **Dental Insurance Coverage**

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- Dental plans can change yearly so it is important for the patient to consult with their provider prior to treatment
- Insurance alone may not cover the total cost of treatment
- Most insurance plans cover two dental visits per year which typically include an oral examination, cleaning and fluoride application
- Some plans may not cover advanced procedures such as oral surgery or braces

### **MassHealth Coverage**

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- Refer to the MassHealth website to find a dental provider in the area
- Coverage may change so check prior to the appointment
- Currently more procedures and treatment options are covered for children (0-21) compared to adults

### **Low Cost Non-private Practice Dental Options**

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- 1.) Dental Schools
- 2.) Clinical trials
- 3.) Community Health Centers



# What to expect when visiting the dentist

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## What to expect<sup>18</sup>

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- It is the patients right to receive kind and respectful care
- Patients will have to provide past medical and dental conditions
- The first appointment may take longer so that the dental team can fully evaluate the patients oral health
- The first dental visit should be a complete examination that includes the following:
  - 1.) A cleaning of the teeth
  - 2.) X-rays of the oral cavity and jaw
  - 3.) A full examination of the oral cavity
  - 4.) Development of a treatment plan if any issues arise

## Members of the dental office team and their roles

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- Office staff- coordinate scheduling, billing, and other support functions for the office
- The dental assistant- assists the dentist and hygienist in procedures
- The hygienist- conducts the cleaning, polishing and flossing of teeth
- The dentist- performs all procedures and develops treatment plans

## Treatment Plans

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- The treatment plan is an agreement between the dentist and the patient on how to resolve a problem with a tooth or other problem in the mouth
- Multiple treatment plans should be presented to the patient and should include the health benefits, risks of non-treatment, time required, insurance coverage and any out of pocket expenses that insurance may not cover
- Patients should ask the dentist any questions along with addressing any concerns they may have
- Once a treatment plan is agreed upon the patient may need to schedule additional appointments with the office staff

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<sup>18</sup><http://www.colgate.com/app/Colgate/US/OC/Information/OralHealthBasics/CheckupsDentProc/TheDentalVisit/WhatToExpect.cvsp>