



## FEATURE ARTICLE FROM **Always Best Care**

### **Common Dental Problems with Aging**

Oral health is important at any age, but for seniors, dental problems can lead to issues with health and nutrition. It is important that teeth and gums are strong and healthy so your loved one can continue comfortably [eating the foods they enjoy](#) and reduce risk of infection or disease. When dental problems develop, they can affect chewing and swallowing, speech, weight, and underlying health conditions. Regular dental checkups can ensure your aging parent's teeth and gums are in good health and not having a negative impact on their well-being.

Here are a few issues seniors should be aware of as they age:

- **Poorly fitting dentures:** Over time, the way dentures fit in the mouth can change. While they may be snug a first, within a few years gums can shrink and change how they fit. When dentures move around, it can make it uncomfortable to eat, cause irritation in the mouth, and affect speech. The dentist should check denture fit at each visit and make adjustments as necessary.
- **Tooth sensitivity:** With aging, teeth can also become more sensitive to heat and cold. Protective enamel begins to wear away and eating certain foods can be painful. Brushing with toothpaste designed for sensitive teeth can help ease discomfort.
- **Cavities:** Cavities can occur at any age. If left untreated, they can contribute to more serious dental problems and lead to tooth loss. Regular brushing and flossing – as well as professional cleanings at the dentist – can help protect against cavities and treat them as soon as issues arise.
- **Receding gums:** Seniors may notice that their gums have begun to pull away from their teeth or sink down, exposing the tooth's root. There are many factors that can contribute to this, such as gum disease, grinding of the teeth, and even genetics. A thorough cleaning at the dentist will remove any built-up plaque and bacteria to promote healing. Other types of treatment may be recommended as well to prevent more serious problems.
- **Dry mouth:** This is a common issue for seniors, especially those who are on several medications. In addition, with aging, the mouth may produce less saliva leaving it drier. [Sipping on water](#) throughout the day, sucking on sugar-free candies, and using special toothpaste can help alleviate dry mouth.

As your loved one ages, pay attention to their ability to properly care for their teeth and overall health. Conditions such as arthritis can make it more difficult to hold the toothbrush or properly maneuver it in their mouth for a thorough cleaning. Memory loss can make it harder to remember whether they have brushed or to schedule regular checkups. Having the support of an in-home caregiver can make aging in place safer and more comfortable. A caregiver can assist seniors with tasks such as brushing teeth, remembering to take medications, scheduling and attending appointments, and other tasks essential to their overall health and well-being.

Contact [Always Best Care](#) at (855) 470-2273 to schedule a free consultation and learn more about the flexibility and personalization available with in-home care.