

# ORAL HEALTH & SAFETY (DURING A PANDEMIC)



At some point during every dental visit you must remove your mask. This is why some people still assume dental practices are at high risk for COVID-19 exposure. Due to the many safety precautions we take, the risk for transmission of the coronavirus during a dental visit is extremely low.

## WHY ARE DENTAL VISITS IMPORTANT?

Consistent dental visits contain two very important components that are equally essential to maintaining good oral health. When you miss a regular check up, you place yourself at a higher risk for dental problems.



### GENERAL CLEANINGS

Your hygienist reaches the areas of your teeth that you cannot, ensuring your mouth is free from the plaque and tartar buildup that leads to cavities and gum disease.



### ORAL EVALUATIONS

Dental x-rays are essential for identifying problems in their earliest stages, before noticeable symptoms may arise. These risk factors include cavities, gum disease, cracked teeth, jaw problems, and oral cancer.

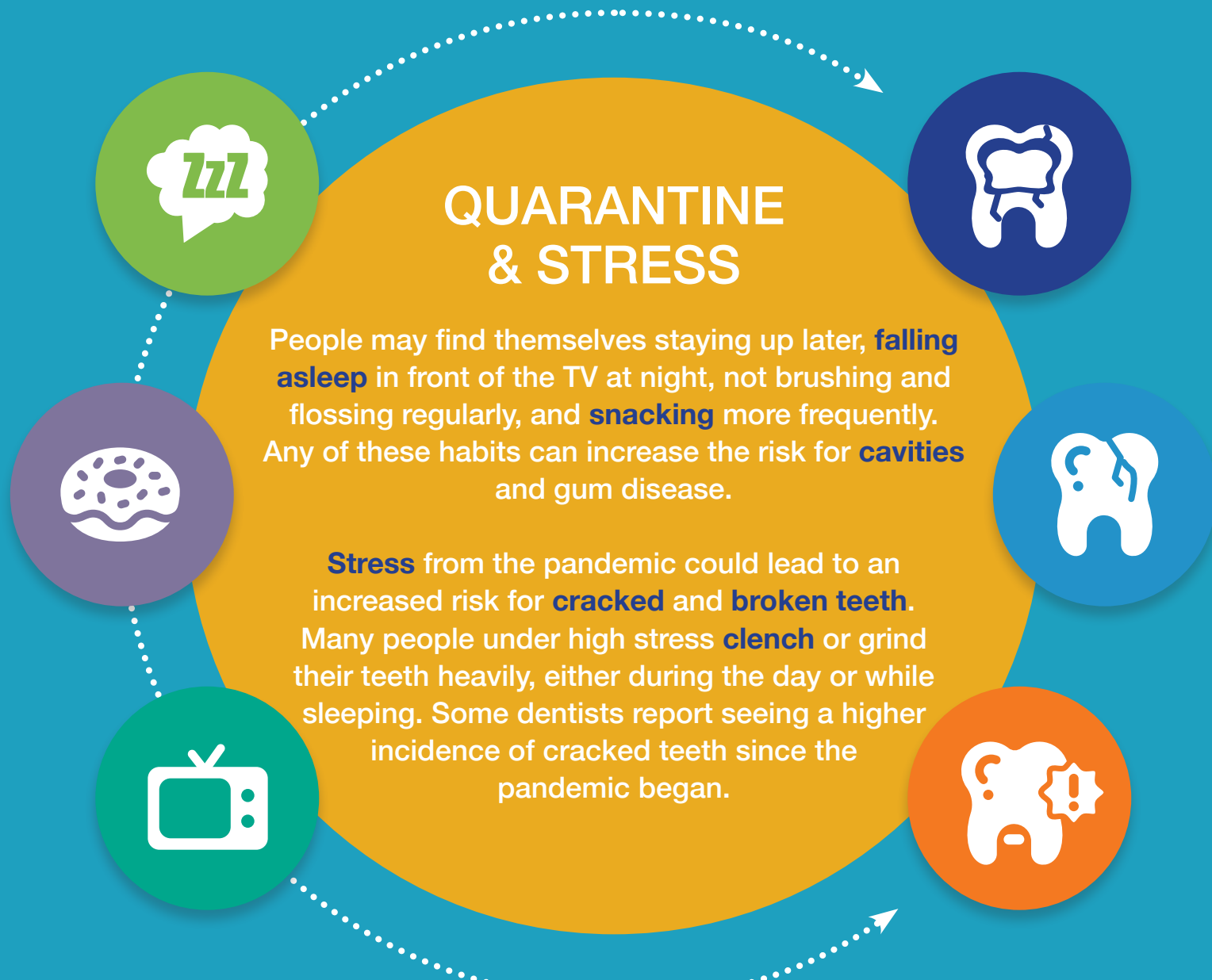
**20%**

And of those studied, 20 percent had untreated tooth decay!



Studies show that **two out of three** adults ages 65 or older have GUM DISEASE.

## HAS COVID INCREASED MY LIKELIHOOD OF DENTAL PROBLEMS?



According to a recent poll, more than half of the surveyed dentists reported an **increase in stress-related health conditions** in their patients. This poll noted a significant surge of teeth grinding, chipped and cracked teeth, and TMJ symptoms, likely due to stress inflicted by the coronavirus pandemic.

## ARE THERE ALTERNATIVES TO IN-PERSON DENTAL VISITS?



Dentistry is quite unique in that there is little value in a virtual visit. Most dental problems require both a dental x-ray and an in-person evaluation to diagnose the problem accurately.

Also, in situations where your dentist can accurately diagnose your concerns through a conversation and shared photo, the problem can only be adequately addressed through dental treatment. An antibiotic prescription might alleviate some of the symptoms and buy you a little time, but it will not fix the underlying condition.

## HOW CAN I ENSURE MY DENTIST IS SAFE?

**1%**

A study by the American Dental Association found that the rate of COVID-19 infection among dentists was less than 1%



While dentists and other dental team members are at the highest risk for COVID spread due to aerosol exposure, they are not suffering a higher rate of transmission. This proves that the protocols work! Be sure to wear a face covering or mask at all times when you are not undergoing treatment, wash your hands, and maintain a six-foot distance between you and anyone besides your dental practitioner.

### DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK YOUR DENTIST IF THEY OFFER:



**EARLY APPOINTMENTS**



**PRE-TREATMENT RINSES**



**COVID SCREENINGS**

When you are scheduling a visit at your dental office, ask what additional protocols the practice has instituted to combat transmission of COVID-19. Listen for things like **screening** of all patients entering the office, mandatory **mask wearing** for anyone in the building, **pre-treatment rinsing**, and increased **PPE** for dental team members. Keep in mind, there are no ways to safeguard an office completely. Use your best judgment to determine if the team member's response helps ease your fears.

**Patients who are particularly high risk for severe cases of COVID-19 should take additional precautions with dental care.** Minimize the risk of virus transmission by prioritizing urgent needs, scheduling the earliest appointment each morning, and performing all necessary treatment efficiently, to avoid multiple visits.

**BEGIN TODAY**

Good oral health is a vital part of your body's ability to fight infections of any kind, including COVID-19. Rather than putting off your next check-up, find a dentist you trust and obtain essential dental care today.



**WANT TO KNOW MORE? GET IN TOUCH!**  
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