Your oral health matters more than you think
Day and night, you make it a priority to take care of your teeth and mouth. You brush to ward off cavities. You do it to avoid bad breath. More than anything, you do it to maintain a beautiful smile. But studies show that good oral health may be a vital part of your overall health.

There’s a mouth-body connection. What goes on in your mouth can affect the rest of your body. And at the same time, what goes on in your body can also affect your mouth.

A big role in your overall well-being
Having a healthy mouth and smile can do more than just boost your self-esteem. It also helps you avoid problems in your mouth, such as gum disease. Gum disease can increase your risk for other serious health problems, too.1

Practice good oral care, and you can:
• Cut your risk for heart disease
• Lower your risk of stroke
• Lower the chances of premature birth
• Help lower your risk of diabetes

Help protect your oral health by sticking with a routine that involves the following:

**Brush twice a day**  
Try for at least two minutes each time. This removes plaque, which can lead to damaged teeth, gums and surrounding bone.

**Limit your sugar intake**  
Food and drinks containing a lot of sugar can cause tooth decay.

**Clean your tongue**  
Practice cleaning it with a scraper or a soft-bristle toothbrush. Stroke in a back-to-front direction.

**Avoid using tobacco**  
It can cause gum disease or oral cancer.

**Floss daily**  
This removes plaque and food particles from places where a toothbrush can’t easily reach.

**Visit your dentist regularly**  
Schedule dental checkups at least twice a year.