

# Six great reasons to have your teeth cleaned



We'll do whatever it takes and then some.

## Preventive care is the key to good oral health

Regular dental care can help you and your family stay healthy and pain-free.

- You can get treatment before a problem becomes more serious.
- The state of your dental health can affect other health conditions.
- Many undetected health conditions have oral symptoms.

There are many reasons to have regular dental examinations and cleanings, so make an appointment with your dentist today.

### 1. To prevent gum disease

Gum (periodontal) disease is a bacterial infection caused by plaque — the sticky, colorless, bacteria-filled film that adheres to your teeth. As plaque builds up on teeth, it hardens and becomes tartar, which can be difficult to remove. The bacteria in plaque produce toxins that irritate the gums and cause inflammation and gingivitis. If bacteria are not removed and the inflammation continues, the gum tissues can be destroyed and more advanced stages of gum disease may follow.

### 2. To keep your teeth

As gum disease advances, the pockets grow deeper, and plaque moves further down the tooth root, destroying supporting bone. The affected teeth may loosen and eventually fall out. Since gum disease is the leading cause of tooth loss in adults, regular dental exams and cleanings as well as brushing and flossing in between visits are vital to keeping your teeth.

### 3. To have a brighter smile

Personal habits — such as tobacco use or drinking coffee, tea and other beverages — can cause tooth staining. Certain medications also can discolor teeth. Teeth cleaning by your dentist or hygienist, however, can often remove these external stains — and it promotes good oral health. In addition to removing plaque and tartar during your cleaning, your hygienist will also polish your teeth to a beautiful shine. The result? A whiter and brighter smile!

### 4. To prevent bad breath

Persistent bad breath (halitosis) has many possible oral causes such as poor oral hygiene, periodontal disease, a coating on the surface of the tongue, food stuck between teeth, unclean dentures, oral carcinomas or throat infections. Good oral hygiene is essential in preventing many of these conditions and can, in turn, prevent bad breath. Regular checkups and cleanings are the best way to make

## WE KEEP YOU SMILING®

Why do 54 million enrollees trust their smiles to Delta Dental?

- More dentists
- Simpler process
- Less out-of-pocket

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sure that you are maintaining good oral hygiene.

### 5. To help maintain overall health

There is mounting evidence of a connection between a person's oral and overall health. Recent studies have linked heart disease and strokes to gum disease. Although no causal relationships have been discovered, a dental cleaning every six months to keep your teeth and gums healthy could possibly reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke. In addition, if you have regular oral examinations,

your dentist may be the first health care provider to diagnose a health problem in its early stages.

### 6. To make the most of your dental benefits

Most Delta Dental plans have low or no copayments/coinsurance for routine preventive care such as dental cleanings and checkups every six months. If you take advantage of your benefits, you'll save money in the long run by avoiding more costly dental procedures that can result from poor oral hygiene.