

# You've Got A Great Smile: How To Keep It Healthy For Years To Come



(NAPSA)—If you are like most baby boomers, you've taken good care of your smile since childhood. You likely brushed twice a day and continue that ritual today. You may even floss regularly, too, in order to maintain a fresh and clean smile.

Americans entering their 40s, 50s and 60s have taken better care of their teeth than any previous generation. However, experts say this generation is now entering a critical time, when they must take solid steps to improve their dental health for the second half of their lives.

"When we were children, many of us remember our grandparents settling for dentures because it was the only choice," said Dr. Patrick Lloyd, president of the American College of Prosthodontists, an organization of specialists in implant, aesthetic and reconstructive dentistry. "Fortunately, our generation has invested more time and money into our health and appearance, and there are several new ways that we can ensure our smiles are healthy for years to come."

## **Consider A Whole Mouth Evaluation**

Just as it is important to obtain a bone density screening for osteoporosis or a mammogram for breast cancer, it's also essential to get a whole mouth evaluation to prevent any future dental problems.

In order to make a wise investment and protect your smile, consult a dental specialist, such as a prosthodontist. Prosthodontists are specialists in aesthetic, reconstructive and implant dentistry, which includes everything from replacing a single tooth to recon-

structing an entire smile. Recognized by the American Dental Association, they have three years specialized residency training beyond that of general dentists.

Prosthodontists can provide a whole mouth evaluation, examining how well your mouth looks and functions. They can also predict future problems and identify proactive solutions.

## **New Techniques Are Creating Lasting Smiles**

In cases where few teeth are present, dental implants are becoming a popular option. Unlike dentures, dental implants are anchored into the jawbone as replacement roots. They function as permanent teeth, allowing consumers to chew all foods easily. Dental implants also keep the jaw active and prevent the loss of the jawbone.

When patients have a full set of teeth but want to correct the shape or sharpen the shine, veneers are a popular way to obtain a new smile. Popular on makeover shows, veneers are usually made from porcelain and slip over the natural tooth, giving it a new look.

Finally, prosthodontists may recommend a crown, which covers and supports teeth that may be weakened due to fillings. They can be used to repair a chipped or broken tooth, or prevent one from breaking in the first place.

## **Go To A Pro**

Because each smile is unique, you'll want to trust your smile to a pro—a prosthodontist. For more information or to find a prosthodontist in your area, call the American College of Prosthodontists at 1-800-378-1260 or log on to [www.GoToAPro.org](http://www.GoToAPro.org).