

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

How Can Non-Oral Health Professionals Help Prevent Dental Caries?

Oral Health



Overall Health

WHY IT MATTERS



Most common chronic disease



Preventable but often untreated



Impacts overall health & quality of life

Caries = Tooth Decay

Caries progression

Healthy → White spot → Cavity → Severe decay
(Not all dark spots = decay)

What causes it?

Bacteria → Biofilm (plaque) + sugar → Acid → Enamel damage

What Are the Main Risk Factors?



Frequent sugar intake



Poor oral hygiene



Dry mouth
(e.g. meds, age)



Lack of access to care



Tobacco use



Alcohol consumption

What Protects?

- ✓ Brushing 2x/day with 1000+ ppm fluoride toothpaste
- ✓ Regular dental visits
- ✓ Healthy diets low in sugar
- ✓ Good hygiene

The 5-Step Framework:

1

Ask

Diet, hygiene, symptoms, history

2

Look for

White spots, plaque, cavities

3

Decide

Is the person high risk?

4

Act

Advise on preventive measures (e.g., dietary changes, better oral hygiene, fluoride use) and refer to a dentist if needed

5

Document

Track and update

Learn More: fdiworlddental.org/educational-module-other-healthcare-professionals