

Better teeth better health (v19-v22)

19. Oral Care Tips for Care of Older Persons with Dementia

照顧認知障礙症長者的口腔護理小錦囊

When you are caring for someone who is confined to bed or a person with dementia, their many health problems may have taken up all your attention.

當你在照顧一位長期臥病在床或患有認知障礙症的人士，他們的許多健康問題可能已經引起了你的所有關注。

Oral care can easily be overlooked.

而口腔護理很容易被忽略。

However, it is mentioned repeatedly earlier in this course that maintaining proper oral hygiene is a crucial factor that influences a senior's overall health and their quality of life.

然而如課程前段，我們一直反覆強調，維持口腔衛生是影響長者整體健康和生活質素的重要因素。

How can you assist when you need to take care of a person who has difficulty maintaining a healthy mouth on their own?

你如何協助照顧一位有困難自行維持口腔衛生的人？

Two things remain critical.

以下兩點非常重要：

First, you need to help them keep their mouth clean with reminders to brush and floss daily.

第一，你要提醒他們每天要刷牙和用牙線，保持口腔清潔。

Second, make sure they get to a dentist regularly.

第二，確保他們定期看牙醫。

Yet, the tasks that look simple to most of us can become very challenging and complicated process to someone whose cognition is declining or is impaired.

這些我們看來非常簡單的事，對認知力下降或受損的人來說，卻是非常具挑戰性和很複雜的過程。

Older people with dementia may behave in ways that are resistive to oral health care.


有認知障礙症的長者，對於口腔護理可能會表現出抗拒。

Their changed behaviour may cause distress to the carer when interacting with them.

他們的行為改變，可能令照顧者在溝通時很困擾。

As the condition progresses, the senior may become increasingly agitated and noncompliant during oral care.

當病情持續發展，長者或會對口腔護理更為激動和不肯順從。

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For those who wear dentures, carer needs to pay close attention to their eating habits.
照顧者應該特別留意佩戴假牙的長者，他們的飲食習慣有否改變。

If they are having difficulty eating or are not eating as much as usual, denture problems could be the cause.

如發現他們進食有困難，或比平常吃的少，可能是假牙有問題所致。


People with dementia may have difficulty to verbally communicate their oral discomfort.
有認知障礙症的人士可能不能說出自己口腔的不適。

Nevertheless, early detection of oral problems can prevent the development of its complications.
不管如何，越早發現口腔問題，可以防止發展至併發症。

The discomfort may be exhibited with the following behaviours:

以下各行為可能反映出其口腔有所不適：

- ✓ **Not opening the mouth**
不肯開口
- ✓ **Rubbing or touching their cheek or jaw**
揉搓或觸摸面頰或下巴
- ✓ **Moaning or shouting out, head rolling or nodding, and flinching, especially when washing their face or being shaved**
尤其在幫他們洗臉或剃鬚時，他們會發牢騷或大叫，搖擺頭部或上下點頭，和畏縮
- ✓ **Restlessness, poor sleep, increased irritation or aggression, or**
坐立不安、睡眠欠佳、越趨惱怒或攻擊性；或者
- ✓ **Refusal or reluctance to put in dentures when previously there was not a problem**
拒絕或不願帶上假牙，而之前卻未曾有這個問題

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20. Brushing and Flossing

刷牙與用牙線

Brushing and flossing the teeth of a person with dementia is often a struggle.

替認知障礙症人士刷牙或用牙線清潔，通常是很困難並充滿掙扎的過程。

The senior may grab out, hit out on the carer.

長者可能會抓或打照顧者。

They may refuse to open the mouth, bit on the toothbrush, turning their face away or walk away.

不肯張口，咬著牙刷，把臉轉開，或乾脆走開；

Supervision or assistance is often needed.

所以很多時候會需要指導或協助。

The senior need to feel safe, secure and cared for in order to get engaged into this daily activity of daily living.

這些長者需要有安全感和覺得受到關懷，才可以配合到這個日常所需的活動。

Carer should set up a right environment, communicate effectively, promote participation and respond appropriately to the senior's behaviours.

照顧者應該提供良好的環境，妥善溝通，鼓勵長者參與，和適當地回應他們的行為訴求。

Before starting off, the carer should establish a trust relation with the senior.

開始前，照顧者應該與長者建立了互信的關係。

Carer can refer to some basic tips:

並可參考以下各個基本錦囊：

- ✓ **Brushing teeth becomes a complicated task.**

刷牙成為了一項複雜的任務。

Mimic what you want the senior to do.

模仿你想長者們做的動作。

Carer would need to guide the senior through the steps or even doing the steps yourself at the same time to show them.

照顧者需要一步步引導長者，甚至同時自己先做一次那動作，再指導長者怎樣做。

- ✓ **Hand over to the senior the toothbrush with already toothpaste on it.**

準備牙膏後才把牙刷遞給長者。

Put your hand over theirs to start the up-and-down brushing movement.


把手放在他們的手上，開始示範如何上下刷。

- ✓ **If assistance is needed, it is easier to stand behind the senior while assisting this act.**


若長者需要協助，站在他後面會比較容易輔助他刷牙。

- ✓ **If the senior is likely to swallow the fluoride toothpaste, try brushing just with water or baking soda toothpaste, instead of tell them to spit it out.**

若長者有可能吞下含氟化物牙膏，與其叫他吐出牙膏，不如嘗試只用清水或蘇打牙膏刷牙。

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- ✓ A toothbrush with a large handle will be a better choice as it is easier for the senior to hold onto and maneuver.
 大把手的牙刷是比較好的選擇，因為長者可以容易抓住來使用。
 Another option is an electric toothbrush which is also easier to use.
 另一個易用的選擇是電動牙刷。
 However, a person with dementia may be frightened by an unfamiliar device for brushing.
 然而，有認知障礙症的人士對於不熟悉的儀器可能會感到恐懼。
 Therefore, carer needs to check the acceptance of the senior.
 所以照顧者須先查看長者的接受程度如何。
- ✓ Never force the senior to open their mouth.
 切勿強迫長者張開嘴。
- ✓ Stimulate the senior's root reflex with your finger by stroking their cheek in the direction of the mouth.
 用手指撫摸他們的臉頰，刺激他們的根反射。
- ✓ Place toothpaste on the top lip to prompt the person to lick their lips.
 將牙膏放在上唇，提示他舔嘴唇。
- ✓ Or try using a Q-tip or gauze wrapped around your finger to clean the oral cavity instead of using toothbrush.
 或者嘗試使用纏繞在手指上的棉花棒或纏繞在手指上的紗布清潔口腔，而不是使用牙刷。
- ✓ Try Chinese tea for the Chinese, which is a familiar taste that may sometime help the senior to be willing to open their mouth.
 試試中國茶，一種熟悉的口味，可能使長者願意張開嘴。
- ✓ Take a break and try later if the resistance persists.
 休息一下，如果阻力持續可以稍後再試。

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21. When the senior hits out

當長者出手打人時

Carer should figure out what may have caused the behavior.

照顧者應該首先了解甚麼原因導致他有這樣的行為。

- ✓ Was the client frightened?
他是恐懼嗎？
- ✓ Did something hurt?
有被弄痛了嗎？
- ✓ Was the person trying to help but the message was mixed?
是不是長者想幫忙但訊息太混亂？
- ✓ Was the person trying to say 'stop'?
是長者想說「不要」嗎？
- ✓ Did the person feel insecure or unsafe?
他會否覺得不安全？

The carer needs to attend to the meaning behind the behaviour.

照顧者需要先找出行為背後的意思。

Otherwise, the oral care activity would only become a frustrated moment for both the senior and carer.

否則，護理口腔的活動只會令長者與照顧者雙方都很氣餒。

If dental care is proving to be very difficult or extremely unpleasant for the senior and the carer, regular visit to dentist for dental care will be essential.

若長者與照顧者都覺得口腔護理非常困難，或是非常不愉快的活動，那麼定期看牙醫將會是必要的。

Furthermore, the best time for oral care does not need to be the first thing in the morning and last thing at night.


再者，口腔護理不一定在一大清早或晚上臨睡前才做。

Instead, it is more useful to establish a daily routine and to find a time that the senior is able to focus on the task and is relaxed.

反而更有用的，是建立一個日常的護理習慣，讓長者集中和輕鬆完成任務，其實在一天甚麼時候做都沒問題；

It is crucial to engage the senior to participate in the task instead of forcing them to do it.

重點是要吸引長者參與護理，而不是迫他去做。

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22. Chewing or Swallowing Issues

咀嚼或吞嚥問題

If there is no chewing or swallowing issues, a fruit salad can be surprisingly helpful in maintaining their dental hygiene.

若沒有咀嚼或吞嚥問題，生果沙律會對維持口腔衛生非常有幫助。

Try to end every meal with a few orange slices and a few pieces of crisp, raw fruits and vegetables, such as apples, pears, celery or carrots.

嘗試每餐後吃幾片橙，和一些脆的及新鮮的水果和蔬菜，例如蘋果、梨、芹菜或紅蘿蔔。

The acid in the oranges will break down the sugar and starch in their mouth, and the crunchy fruits or vegetables will help “brush” plaque from their teeth.

橙內的果酸會分解口腔的糖和澱粉，而鮮脆的蔬果則幫助「刷走」牙菌斑。

Once again, the last step is taking the time to have them drink water or at least rinse out their mouth after eating.

同樣地，最後讓他們在餐後喝水，或至少漱口。

In general, older people with dementia have poorer oral health and oral hygiene than those without this condition.

總的來說，患有認知障礙症的長者，健康與口腔衛生會較其他長者差。

It is therefore important to consider individual needs. How they can be supported to participate in their self-care to maintain daily oral hygiene.


因此，考慮他們的個別需要尤其重要，如何支持他們自理，保持日常口腔衛生。

With proper brushing methods, techniques and tools, carers can assist the senior with dementia to get familiarize with the routine.

使用正確的刷牙方法、技巧和工具，照顧者可以協助認知障礙症的長者熟悉日常的清潔。

The senior can resume self-care on daily oral hygiene and will not be dependent on carers when they can still have the capability to do it.

令長者可以在仍然可恢復自理能力，維持日常口腔衛生，而再不需要依賴照顧者。

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