

The Fit 4 Prevention Mindset: 2) Actively Preventing and Managing Caries in Adult Patients

Considerable progress has been made in preventing caries in children and adolescents. Unfortunately, very few people then go-on to remain cavity-free throughout their adult life. How can we transfer our caries prevention success with children to our adult patients?

No secret: oral hygiene, diet and fluoride are still the three pillars of caries prevention.

Coach your adult patients for caries prevention:

- Adults still need help to remain cavity-free. Children have parents and supervisors – adults need YOU, their oral health coach!
- Reminding to brush is not enough. Aim for a motivational dialogue – help your patients discover that improved oral hygiene is important for achieving a good health and appearance. Tell them that remaining cavity-free is both desirable and achievable.
- No tooth left behind! – stress that every surface of every tooth needs to get brushed.
- Provide nutritional advice, particularly on the need to limit snacking and hidden sugars.

Preventing cavities is your responsibility – and it is achievable in your adult patients too!

Much of the success of caries prevention in children and adolescents has been due to the systematic and concerted approach taken by dental professionals and public health authorities. You can also help your adult patients remain cavity-free by applying a similar systematic approach, which includes continuous oral health coaching, routinely assessing their caries-risk and prescribing additional fluoride to at-risk patients. For more information see www.colgatetalks.com/caries-risk-assessment-management/

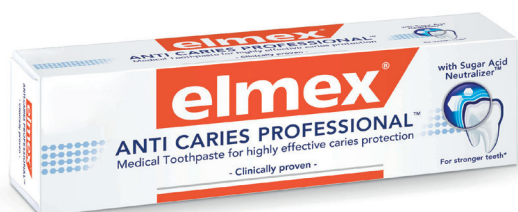
1. Routinely assess the caries-risk level of all your patients.

- Clinical observation – are there visible risk-factors, such as active lesions, exposed dentine, dry mouth or thick and sticky plaque?
- Patient dialogue – ask about oral hygiene and snacking, but also about medical conditions and the medications they routinely take.

2. Classify the patient's caries-risk level (low, moderate or high).

3. Agree on a caries-risk management plan with your adult patients:

- Act to prevent and reverse early lesions before the first cavitation has occurred.
- Recommend a specific caries protective toothpaste with fluoride to your low-risk patients (e.g. elmex® Anti-Caries Professional™ or Colgate® Maximum Cavity Protection plus Sugar Acid Neutraliser™).



- Prescribe and recommend high fluoride products for home-use to your patients with above normal caries risk (e.g. Colgate® Duraphat® 5000ppm fluoride toothpaste or elmex® gelée).
- Apply fluoridation in-office also to your adult patients, for example following professional tooth cleaning (e.g. Colgate® Duraphat® Varnish or elmex® gelée).

Evidence shows at-risk patients need additional fluoride to stay cavity-free.