

# Your Dental Health Care Team

Each member of your dental health team plays an important role.

## Dentist

Your dentist brings years of specialized education to understanding your oral health. Only dentists can examine your teeth, gums, and mouth, and recognize any problems that could affect your overall health.

They have the training and skills to:

- Examine and diagnose your oral condition
- Recommend treatment, and carry it out
- Look for signs of oral cancer — and often be the first to spot them
- Help you understand oral health care and its importance, helping you to keep your teeth healthy and comfortable for your entire lifetime
- Inform you about post-operative care options
- Perform emergency or required procedures now — and help you determine a long-term treatment plan that meets your needs and circumstances

## Dental Therapist

In some jurisdictions, dental therapists work with dentists to provide community-based preventive oral health programs. They also perform basic dental treatment and preventive services as well as providing patient assistance and referrals.

## Dental Hygienist

The dental hygienist is registered and trained to clean your teeth and to help you develop a home-care routine tailored to your needs.

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CANADIAN  
DENTAL  
ASSOCIATION



Regulations vary from province to province, but a dental hygienist's work will often include:

- Taking x-rays
- Taking dental impressions
- Cleaning, polishing, and applying fluoride to your teeth

In some jurisdictions, the dental hygienist may be allowed to perform a basic exam.

#### Dental Assistant

This is the team member who prepares you for treatment, sterilizes instruments, assists your dentist, and helps keep your mouth dry during procedures. In some jurisdictions, a dental assistant may also take x-rays, make dental impressions, and polish and apply fluoride to your teeth.

#### Receptionists and Business Staff

Receptionists maintain the dental team's schedules and allow the office to run smoothly. The receptionist is usually your first point of contact, and may often provide you with general information about your appointment and billing.