



Oral Cares in Late Stage Dementia

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Individuals with late stage dementia are more susceptible to dental problems for the following reasons:

- Inability to complete oral cares independently.
- Taking multiple medications which can cause side effects such as dry mouth which can result in dental decay.
- Changes to diet due to difficulties with eating and swallowing.

Before completing oral cares it is important to wash your hands and put on gloves to ensure the safety of yourself and the other individual.

There is no ‘one size fits all’ approach to providing oral cares.

However, it’s important to remember to encourage independence as much as possible.



Below are strategies you can utilise when providing oral cares:

- Help the individual to understand the task by:
 - Firstly, show the toothbrush to the individual and model the action of brushing teeth.
 - Place the toothbrush in the individual's preferred hand and let them brush their own teeth.
- If the individual does not start brushing their teeth:
 - Gently bring the person's hand & toothbrush to their mouth.
 - Describe the activity.
 - Then let the person take over & continue.
- If the above strategies are not effective:
 - Place the toothbrush in the individual's hand.
 - Next, place your hand over the individual's hand and start brushing their teeth.



Finally, a few points to remember:

- Approach the individual diagonally from the front.
- Explain to the individual what you are doing and build trust.
 - this is especially important if you need to support a person's head and neck from behind to deliver oral cares.
- Note, if further support is required, ask an extra person to aid in positioning.

