

## PRESS RELEASE

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# Happy Mouth Happy Mind,' For World Oral Health Day

**Release Date:** 20 March, 2025



The Ministry of Health and Social Development is encouraging members of the community to prioritise their oral health as the Territory observes World Oral Health Day.

This year's theme, "*A Happy Mouth is a Happy Mind*," highlights the important link between oral health and mental and physical health.

Acting Chief Medical Officer Dr. Ronald Georges said oral health is essential to overall health while poor oral health can lead to gum disease, tooth decay, and infections that have been linked to heart disease, diabetes, and other long-term conditions.

Dr. Georges added that poor oral health can cause pain, discomfort, and social anxiety, which may negatively affect overall quality of life. He said, "We want to make sure that everybody knows that good oral health is important to overall health and wellness. Having a healthy mouth equals a healthier, happier life. Let's all take responsibility to protect our smiles and improve our quality of life."

The following are a few tips to maintain good oral health:

- **Brush your teeth twice a day** with fluoride toothpaste for at least two minutes to effectively clean all tooth surfaces.
- **Brush between your teeth once daily** with floss or interdental brushes to clear out food particles and plaque.
- **Limit sugar intake** to no more than:
  - 6 teaspoons a day for adults
  - 3 teaspoons a day for children
- **Avoid sugary drinks and snacks** — opt for water instead.
- **Maintain a healthy, well-balanced diet** to support strong teeth and gums.
- **Avoid tobacco products** and **minimize alcohol consumption** as both increase the risk of gum disease and oral cancers.
- **Wear a mouth guard** during contact sports to protect against tooth injuries.
- **Visit your dentist regularly** to prevent oral diseases and detect issues early.

For more information regarding oral health, please visit [worldoralhealthday.org](http://worldoralhealthday.org) or contact the Ministry of Health and Social Development at 284-468-2271.

The Ministry of Health and Social Development is committed to improving the health of the people of the Virgin Islands