**Oral Care**

Areas of the mouth that need to be cleaned during oral care:

* **Teeth** (all sides)
* **Gums**
* **Cheeks**
* Roof of the mouth (**hard palate**)
* Back of the mouth (**soft plate**)
* **Tongue**

Essential oral care equipment:

* **Penlight** (to inspect the oral cavity prior to cleaning)
* **Tongue depressor** (to aid in viewing the oral cavity)
* **Sage suction products**/**Toothbrush and toothpaste**
* **Oral suction/Yankauer**

Additional equipment that may be required or helpful:

* **Oral care bite blocks**- appropriate to use with patients who are unwilling or unable to cooperate with oral care

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*Pink swabs alone are not adequate for oral care.*

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*Note: A swallowing assessment may not be able to be completed when oral hygiene is poor, in order to prevent putting the patient in a high risk situation to contract aspiration pneumonia.*