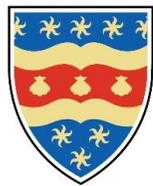


Looking after your oral health



**UNIVERSITY OF
PLYMOUTH**



**Improving Lives
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Peninsula Dental

Social Enterprise

Introduction

Having a healthy mouth can help keep your whole body healthy. Poor dental health has been shown to cause gum disease, heart disease, diabetes and various other complications so looking after your oral health is very important. In this toolkit you will find the following information:

How to effectively brush your teeth

How to effectively clean in between your teeth

How to look after someone else's teeth

Cleaning dentures and general denture care

Information on toothpaste and mouth wash

Further information and resources about oral health

When brushing your teeth, it is important that you do not only brush in a back and forth motion.

What you want to do is use a small circular motion.

Ensure you are cleaning all of the tooth surfaces.

You want to make sure you're even cleaning on your gums.

Angle your toothbrush 45-degrees towards the gums whilst using that same circular motion. This circular motion really makes sure to get the bristles of the tooth brush under the gums to remove any bacteria, food and plaque which may be causing inflammation and swelling. If you find this is hurting your gums, try using a soft bristles toothbrush which should avoid this problem. Make sure you are not pressing too hard otherwise this can cause further pain and sensitivity.

You want to brush for two minutes, twice a day using this method. Make sure to brush last thing at night and at least on one other occasion.

You also want to change your tooth brush every three months or sometimes even sooner than that as soon as you see the bristles are splaying out. Worn out tooth brushes won't give you the optimum clean and can be very abrasive for your teeth.

How to effectively brush your teeth

Why Interdental Cleaning is important?

Helps remove food debris and plaque that collects between teeth in an area which a toothbrush is too big to reach.

Brushing alone only cleans 60% of your teeth.

This area in between the teeth is where most dental decay starts.

Leaving bacteria in between your teeth can result in loss of gum support, recession, and loss of bone around your teeth. These are all key supporting tissues which keep your teeth in place. Once bone loss occurs, it cannot be recovered, and teeth can become mobile which in turn can lead to infections and loss of teeth.

It is particularly important for those who are more susceptible to infections from bacteria in their mouth, such as the elderly, the very young and those with auto-immune disease.

Methods of interdental cleaning

Interdental cleaning is very personal and so it is very important to find a method that works for the individual, and suits their lifestyle.

There are a lot of interdental aids out there so it can be confusing to decide what to use and how to use it. For larger interdental areas an interdental brush is most effective such as the Tepe interdental brushes.

The interdental brushes should fit the space tightly. If unsure on size a mixed bag can be bought to find a suitable size. We always recommend you ask your dentist for advice.

For tighter interdental spaces, usually at the front of the mouth, floss or dental tape can be used if the interdental brushes won't fit. There are different types of floss such as dental tape (wide flat waxed floss and doesn't shred).

How to effectively clean
in between your
teeth

INTERDENTAL BRUSH TECHNIQUE:

- Choose the correct size brush
- Insert gently
- Move brush back and forth in each space
- As the inflammation reduces in the Interdental area you will need to move up the sizes of brushes
- Change the brush when the filaments become worn.

FLOSSING TECHNIQUE:

- Starting with about 18 inches of floss, wind most of the floss around each middle finger, leaving an inch or two of floss to work with.
- Holding the floss taut between your thumbs and index fingers, slide it gently up and down in between your teeth
- Gently curve the floss around the base of each tooth, making sure you go beneath the gum line. Do not use a sawing action as this can cut or bruise your gum and wear a hole in your tooth. Always use a scooping action.
- Use a clean section of floss as you move from tooth to tooth

People may find that their gums bleed and feel sore when using interdental brushes or floss. This is perfectly normal for the first 7-10 days. It is caused by inflammation, your bodies method of fighting the accumulation of this unhealthy bacteria by sending white blood cells to the area. After the first few days of interdental cleaning this bleeding will reduce. Please seek dental advice if at all concerned.

How to effectively
clean in between your
teeth

How To Brush Someone Else's Teeth

Equipment Needed

Soft Bristled Toothbrush (manual or electric)

Fluoridated Toothpaste (containing 1300-1500ppm)

Towel

Bowl

Cup of water

Method

Prepare all the equipment you may need

Make sure you wash your hands before you start

Dip the toothbrush in water and apply a pea sized amount of toothpaste

Stand behind the person, cradling their head in your non dominant arm.

Retract the cheek using; your finger, spoon, another toothbrush (or anything that makes this easier)

Place the toothbrush in the mouth and angle it towards the gum line

Using a circular motion brush the outside surface, biting surface and inside surface of all the teeth. Brushing along the gum margin.

Let the person spit into the bowl as frequently as they need to. Place it under their chin to allow them to do so.

After brushing all the teeth, brush the tongue also using a sweeping motion back to front.

Do NOT rinse the mouth after brushing as you will wash all the protective fluoride from the teeth

After brushing, rinse and dry the toothbrush and store it upright.

How to look
after someone
else's teeth

Hand over Hand Technique

If the person you are caring for would like to brush their own teeth but they have limited dexterity, you can let them hold the toothbrush and place your hand over the top in the 'hand over hand' technique, guiding them around the mouth. Use the same method as described above.

Top Tips

Teeth can be brushed in any room of the house that is comfortable for you to work on. This isn't necessarily a bathroom. The person should ideally be sat upright, with their back supported.

When looking after someone else's teeth it is important to brush them twice a day for two minutes, using a soft bristled brush and fluoridated toothpaste. Once before the person goes to bed and once at any other time of day.

Teeth should not be brushed straight after eating. You should wait at least 30min before brushing teeth.

When you brush someone else's teeth it is key to verbalise what you are doing to make the person you are looking after feel at ease.

You can use a manual or electric toothbrush to brush the teeth.

Don't lean the person too far back as this can cause gagging. The reason you should do this is to prevent yourself from obtaining any injuries to your back, as doing this frequently can be straining.

As long as you manage to brush all the teeth the order in which you brush them is not important. You need to brush; the outside surface, the biting surface, and the inside surface of all the teeth. You do not need to apply a lot of pressure to the teeth when brushing, it should be like stroking the wings of a butterfly. It's using the right technique that is the most important thing.

Don't be afraid to move around the person whilst brushing their teeth for better access to some hard to reach areas. This will take practice.

It is very important that the person does not rinse their mouth out after having their teeth brushed. The fluoride in toothpaste protects teeth from decay, so rinsing the mouth removes that protective barrier. The toothpaste should be left in the mouth for as long as possible.

This can be a difficult thing for people to get used to. There are many brands and flavours of toothpaste out there, so if it is the minty taste that is an issue, you can buy unflavoured toothpaste. Some foam more than others, so find what works for you and the person you are looking after.

How to look after someone else's teeth

Why have dentures?

If you (or the person you are caring for) is missing teeth, dentures can help improve your ability to chew food and speak. You may also find they help aesthetically - being able to smile confidently and lifting your face. They are custom-made for you - so you can choose the shade of the teeth to look as natural as possible. Dentures can help to protect your remaining teeth

Caring for dentures

You need to take your denture out (or the denture of the person you are caring for) every night.

When you take it out, brush the denture with a large, soft brush - DO NOT use toothpaste on the denture.

Overnight, put the denture in a glass of cold water.

Do not use warm water as this will not assist in cleaning the denture and can cause the denture to change shape, and then it won't fit properly.

Once a week, you can mix a denture cleaning tablet (e.g. sterodent) with the water overnight

If you find the denture is a little loose, you can use an adhesive (such as fixodent), or visit your dentist for them to adjust the denture as necessary.

Cleaning dentures and general denture care

It is important that when you brush your teeth, you use fluoridated toothpaste. The same applies to when you use mouthwash. Fluoride is the ingredient that makes your teeth stronger more resistant to acids and bacteria. You will usually be able to find out whether the toothpaste/mouth-rinse that you are using contains fluoride by simply looking at the packaging.

The concentration of fluoridated toothpaste/mouthwash that you should be using depends on your age and your current oral circumstances. Whether you are brushing your own teeth or caring for someone else's, you should try to adhere to the following guidance:

Children aged up to 3 years: Use fluoridated toothpaste containing no less than 1,000 ppm fluoride • It is good practice to use only a smear of toothpaste (Brushing should be supervised by a parent/carer)

All children aged 3-6 years: Use fluoridated toothpaste containing more than 1,000 ppm fluoride • It is good practice to use only a pea size amount (Brushing should be supervised by a parent/carer)

All adult patients: Use fluoridated toothpaste with at least 1350ppm fluoride. Pea sized amount

Information on toothpaste and mouth wash

Also try to make sure to:

Brush at least twice daily.

Brush last thing at night and at least on one other occasion.

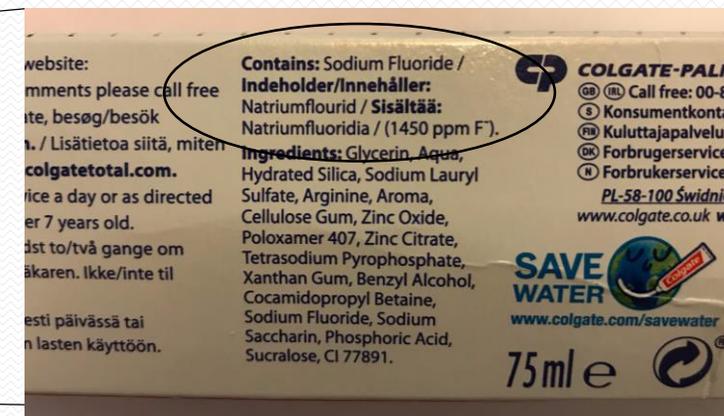
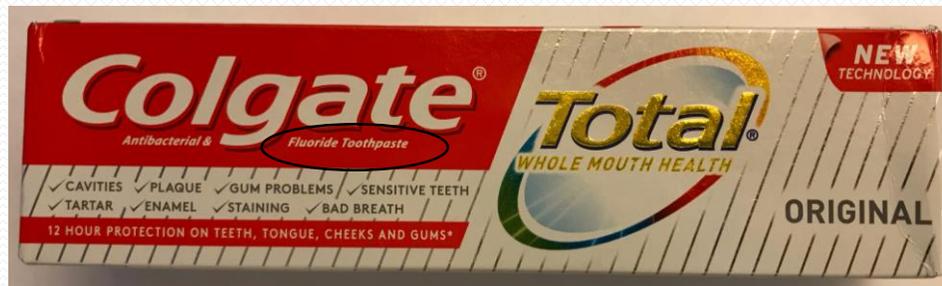
Reduce the frequency and amount of sugary food and drinks that you consume. Try and stick to a maximum of 4 sugar hits a day.

Spit out after brushing and do not rinse. Doing this maintains the high fluoride concentration to help protect your teeth. For this same reason if you are using mouthwash, rinse at a different time to brushing (I.e. after eating food) apposed to immediately after brushing because mouthwash contains less fluoride and will wash away the fluoride from the toothpaste.

Be aware that if you are experiencing sensitivity from any of your teeth, you can use a dab of toothpaste and apply this to the surface of that particular tooth/teeth. It will act as temporary sensitivity relief.

Information on
toothpaste and
mouth wash

Example of fluoridated toothpaste



How to access NHS dental care

Search for an NHS dentist using:

<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist>

If you have a toothache / other dental emergency, and you are not registered with a dentist, call 111 or visit:

<https://111.nhs.uk/>

You may be entitled to free NHS dental care if you:

Are under 18

Are under 19 and in full-time education

If you are pregnant or have had a baby in the last year

Have income-related employment and support allowance

Have income-based jobseeker's allowance

Are on pension credit

Are on universal credit

Have a tax-credit exemption certificate

If you're not sure if you're entitled to one of these benefits, you can use this tool:

<https://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators>

You can also register for the waiting list to be seen at Peninsula Dental School for free, by pressing the 'register' button on the right side of the page at:

<http://peninsuladental.org.uk/our-services/>

**Further information and
resources about oral
health**



THANK YOU