



FLOSSING TEETH

Why Should I Floss My Teeth?

Flossing is vital for keeping teeth clean, and can significantly reduce the chances of cavities and tooth decay as well as gum disease. Remember to help your child learn proper flossing techniques from an early age.

It is recommended to floss at least once a day to remove plaque from the areas between your teeth where the toothbrush cannot reach. There's plaque build-up on your teeth on a daily basis that needs to be removed

To receive maximum benefits from flossing, use the following proper technique:

- Starting with about 45cm of floss, wind most of the floss around each middle finger, leaving an inch or two of floss to work with
- Holding the floss tautly between your thumbs and index fingers, slide it gently up-and-down between your teeth
- Gently curve the floss around the base of each tooth, making sure you go beneath the gumline. Never snap or force the floss, as this may cut or bruise delicate gum tissue
- Use clean sections of floss as you move from tooth to tooth
- To remove the floss, use the same back-and-forth motion to bring the floss up and away from the teeth

Source:

Flossing: Getting Past Those Lame Excuses (webmd.com)

Flossing Techniques - Flossing Teeth Effectively (colgate.com)

Why are we not flossing? We have a list of excuses. With a little work, they all can be overcome.

'I can never do it right.' Many of us don't floss correctly. It is not just inserting the thread in between the teeth and pulling it out. You have to slide it on the tooth surface of both teeth. Only then, it will do a good job.

'My gums bleed when I floss.' If you are just starting flossing, you will probably experience some bleeding. That should stop within a week or two. Your gums will bleed, if you "snap" the floss down on the gum or "saw" at the bottom of a tooth instead of gently moving it up and down.

If your gums continue to bleed after a week or two of regular flossing, visit your dentist to find out what's going on.

'My teeth are too close together.' There *are* tight fits, and they *are* difficult. There are waxed and unwaxed flosses. You can also get them in different thicknesses. Find your match.

'I just don't have the time.' You only *need* to floss once a day. Make time...

'I forget.' You brush your teeth, but forget about flossing? Keep your floss right next to your toothbrush, so you cannot forget it.

'I use mouthwash instead.' With mouthwash, it can help get food particles stuck in your teeth. It can freshen breath. It can kill bacteria, but plaque, for instance, really sticks on the tooth's surface and only mechanically removing it with the floss will help. That's why you use a toothbrush. And that's why you have to floss."

What is the Right Way to Floss?

Proper flossing removes plaque and food particles in places where a toothbrush cannot easily reach — under the gumline and between your teeth. Because plaque build-up can lead to tooth decay and gum disease, daily flossing is highly recommended.