

TOOTHBRUSHES AND TOOTHBRUSHING

Even though we have been brushing and flossing our teeth for years and years, many of us are surprised to learn that we are not doing it properly.

Did you know that proper brushing takes at least two minutes? Most adults do not come close to brushing that long.

Toothbrushes

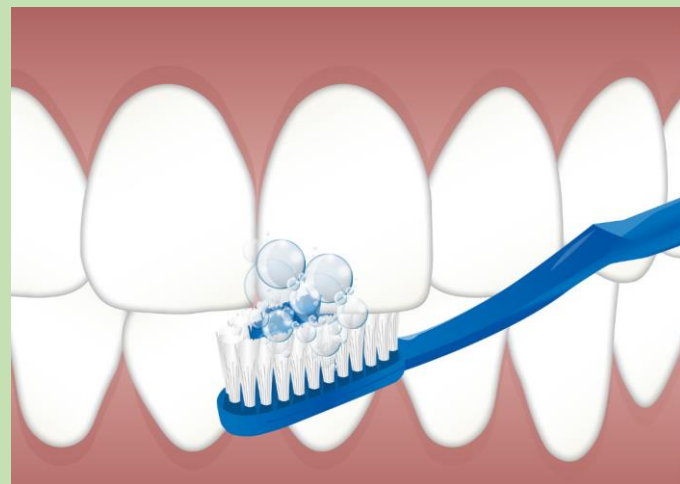
There are various ranges of toothbrush designs options available. One systematic review found that toothbrushes with either multi-level bristles or angled bristles perform better than the conventional flat-trimmed bristles in removing plaque. Although toothbrushes with medium bristles have been shown to be effective in removal of plaque, it is recommended to use a toothbrush with soft bristles because they minimize the risk of gingival injuries.

Both manual and powered toothbrushes are effective at removing plaque. While the powered toothbrushes can be more expensive than most manual toothbrushes, some people prefer the powered version. Elderly, people with disabilities, children, or those who have dental

appliances, like braces, may find a powered toothbrush easier to use.

Taking care of toothbrushes

- Toothbrushes should not be shared. Sharing a toothbrush could result in an exchange of bodily fluids and microorganisms between people.
- Rinse the toothbrush thoroughly after each use to remove any remaining paste and debris.
- Store toothbrushes in an upright position after use and allow them to air dry. Storing a moist toothbrush in a closed container promotes microbial growth more so than leaving it exposed to the open air.
- Toothbrushes should be replaced approximately every three to four months or more often if the bristles become matted or frayed. The effectiveness of the brush decreases as the bristles become worn.



Toothbrushing

Brushing twice a day for at least two minutes helps to remove food particles and dental plaque that can damage teeth and gums over time. Flossing daily helps to remove food that is stuck in or between the teeth, and also plaque, which can severely impact your oral health, if persistent.

To get a feel for the time involved, try using a stopwatch. To properly brush your teeth, use short, gentle strokes, paying extra attention to the gum line, hard-to-reach back teeth and areas around fillings, crowns, implants, or other restoration.

Concentrate on thoroughly cleaning each section as follows:

- use a soft-bristled toothbrush and apply gentle pressure, both of which may help reduce the risk of gingival injury.
- Clean the outer surfaces of your upper teeth, then your lower teeth.
- Clean the inner surfaces of your upper teeth, then your lower teeth.
- Clean the chewing surfaces of all the teeth.
- For fresher breath, be sure to brush your tongue at least once a day, too to remove odour causing bacteria.

Research suggests that the exposure to acidic food and drinks during meals softens the enamel of your teeth. Brushing your teeth immediately after consuming acidic foods and drinks

increases the chance of enamel erosion. To help prevent dental erosion, drink, or rinse with water immediately after eating or drinking. It is recommended that you avoid brushing for at least 30 minutes after eating or drinking acidic foods or drinks, or, better yet, brush your teeth before consumption.

These four steps are the best and easiest ways to help you remember how to care for your mouth, teeth and gums:

1. Brush at least twice a day with fluoride toothpaste for at least two minutes, especially first thing in the morning and before bedtime.
2. Floss every day – usually at bedtime.
3. Limit the number of times you eat snacks each day.
4. Visit your dentist every 6 months for an oral exam and professional cleaning.

This information is intended to promote understand and knowledge about general oral health teeth topics. It is not intended to replace professional advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always ask your dentist or other qualified healthcare provider with any questions your may have regarding a medical condition or treatment.

