

Brushing

Proper Brushing

Brushing Effectively

First things first -- choose a good quality toothbrush. Generally, your dental professional will suggest a brush with end-rounded, soft or ultra soft bristles because softer bristles are less likely to irritate gum tissue. It just so happens that several types of brushes will fit the bill. What you're looking for is a brush that will reach every tooth and also feels comfortable in your hand. And remember, it's important to replace your brush every three to four thousand miles, or three or four months, whichever comes first.



Doing it the right way

1. Position bristles at a 45 angle and be sure they make contact with your teeth and gumline.
2. Using a short back-and-forth motion, brush the inner and outer surfaces of your teeth. But be gentle. Overzealous brushing can do more harm than good.
3. To clean the biting surfaces of your back teeth, point bristles straight up or down then move your brush back and forth.

Don't forget to brush your tongue too. It's a popular gathering place for bad breath bacteria.

Flossing

Proper Flossing

Brushing Alone Is Not Enough!

This doesn't mean brushing twice a day isn't essential. Of course it is. But brushing without flossing, at least once a day, is like washing your car without ever changing the oil. Eventually, you'll be spending way too much time at the repair shop. Which, in this case, means the office of your local dentist or periodontist.

Flossing daily is crucial for healthy teeth and gums. It's easy, too.

1. Find floss that's comfortable for you.
2. Remove about 18" of floss from its container.
3. Wrap it a few times around one middle finger, then wrap most of the remainder around your other middle finger.
4. Leaving 1" to 2" of floss in the center, pull taut and pinch between your thumbs and index fingers. These fingers will be your guides.
5. Keeping taut, slowly and gently work floss between your teeth to the gumline. Do not snap floss into your gums. This can cause damage to your gums.
6. Holding the floss against your tooth, scrape away food particles and plaque by moving it up and down the tooth and under the gumline. Do not pull floss back and forth. This can cause damage to your gums.

