

TIPS FOR HEALTHY SMILES...

Why brush your teeth?

Toothbrushing cleans plaque bacteria and sticky foods off of teeth and gums. Children and adults need to brush in the morning and at bedtime. The more you snack the more you need to brush. Brush all of the teeth inside and outside using short back and forth strokes.

Why use toothpaste?

Toothpaste puts fluoride on the outside surfaces of teeth, and helps to prevent tooth decay.

Only a pea-size amount of fluoride toothpaste is needed for young children - toothpaste should not be swallowed. Teach children to rinse with water after brushing.

Adults may need different types of toothpastes to remove stains on the teeth and to prevent tartar build-up.

Why clean your gums?

Gently massage and clean the gums to remove plaque bacteria, which causes gum (periodontal) disease. Bleeding gums may be a warning sign of gum disease.

Twice a day use a soft bristle toothbrush to clean the gumline inside and outside. "Tickle" your gums with short back and forth strokes.

Why use dental floss?

Dental floss slides between the teeth and underneath the gums to remove plaque bacteria. Floss daily, and always wrap the floss against the side of the tooth as you slide up and down. At your next dental visit ask for a flossing demonstration.

Why choose foods and beverages with little or no sugars?

What we put in our mouths can harm our teeth and cause tooth decay. Plaque bacteria in our mouth use the sugars and starches we eat to make acid. This acid, if left on the teeth, can break down the tooth surfaces and make a cavity. The more often sugars and starches are put in the mouth, the more often acid is coating the teeth.

Limit between-meal foods and beverages that contain sugars and starches.

Choose fresh fruit, vegetables, cheese or nuts as healthy snacks for teeth and bodies.

Drink water when you are thirsty. Brush your teeth after you eat a food or beverage that contains sugar.