

TOP 10 TIPS FOR MAINTAINING IDEAL ORAL HEALTH

1. Maintain regular brushing habits of 2-3 times per day. Use a soft or extra soft toothbrush, and small gentle back-and-forth or circular strokes.
2. Work on perfecting that daily flossing habit. Remember to wrap the floss flush around the tooth and take it gently below the gumline, following the tooth's natural contours. Don't forget to floss under fixed bridges and orthodontic wires.
3. If you have larger gaps between your teeth, consider using an interproximal brush, like a Proxy Brush or Go-Betweens to clean those areas. If it doesn't fit easily or gently through the space, it doesn't go there.
4. Don't discount easy rinsing. Rinsing with water several times a day helps remove and flush out loose plaque and food debris.
5. It's ok to chew gum! Chewing gum stimulates saliva production and this can help flush plaque and bacteria. Just make sure that that gum is SUGAR FREE. Ingredients like Xylitol in your gum can also help to remineralize enamel!
6. If you have a lot of crowns, bridges, or fixed orthodontic hardware, consider using a WaterPik to flush out hard to reach areas.
7. If you have removable appliances, like a complete denture, partial denture, retainers, or Invisalign, make sure to remove them 1-2 times a day to clean them. Brush them with a toothbrush, or denture brush, (NO TOOTHPASTE) and soak them in Polident (or similar) for the time recommended on the package. Let those gums breathe without their appliances for 30 minutes or more. Don't forget to clean your nighttime appliances, like nightguards, daily as well.
8. HEALTHY SNACKS. We all deserve a treat now and then but remember to choose healthy alternatives when you can. Try to stay away from sugary foods and starches, and go for tooth smart foods, like apples, cheese, and raw veggies. Avoid sipping for long periods of time on those sugary or highly acidic drinks.
9. Clean that tongue. The tongue has many grooves where bacteria can hide. Use a tongue scraper or toothbrush to gently clean the top of your tongue.
10. Listen to your gums and teeth. Healthy gums will be a nice pink colour. They won't bleed when you floss them correctly if you've been keeping up with your hygiene. But if you come across areas that are fiery red, tender and bleeding easily, your body is telling you to pay more attention to those areas. Review your brushing and flossing techniques, and ensure you are doing them daily. If those teeth feel furry, it's time to brush. But always remember to be gentle with your teeth and gums, being aggressive and overdoing it could be as problematic as not being diligent enough.

Be sure to maintain your regular dental hygiene visits. Your dental professional will assess your overall oral health, recommend necessary treatment, and provide guidance to help you develop good home care habits that will ensure you have a happy and healthy smile throughout your whole life!

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