

American Dental Hygienists' Association Recommendations

Food Choices

The American Dental Association recommends the following for good dental health:

- Breads, cereals, and other grain products, which provide vitamins for healthy growth of teeth
- Dairy products, which provide calcium and vitamin D for strengthening teeth.
- Fruits and vegetables, which provide vitamin C for healthy gums
- Lean meat, fish, poultry, and beans, which provide iron and protein for overall good health, and magnesium for healthy teeth

Proper Brushing

Proper brushing is essential for cleaning teeth and gums effectively. Use a toothbrush with soft, nylon, round-ended bristles that will not scratch and irritate teeth or damage gums.

Place bristles along the gumline at a 45-degree angle. Bristles should contact both the tooth surface and the gumline.



Gently brush the outer tooth surfaces of 2-3 teeth using a vibrating back & forth rolling motion. Move brush to the next group of 2-3 teeth and repeat.



Maintain a 45-degree angle with bristles contacting the tooth surface and gumline. Gently brush using back, forth, and rolling motion along all of the inner tooth surfaces.



Tilt brush vertically behind the front teeth. Make several up & down strokes using the front half of the brush.



Place the brush against the biting surface of the teeth & use a gentle back & forth scrubbing motion. Brush the tongue from back to front to remove odor-producing bacteria.



--Illustrations adapted by and used courtesy of the John O. Butler Company--

Source: American Dental Hygienists' Association

Toothbrush Care

Remember to replace your toothbrush every three to four months. Researchers have established that thousands of microbes grow on toothbrush bristles and handles. Most are harmless, but others can cause cold and flu viruses, the herpes virus that causes cold sores, and bacteria that can cause periodontal infections.

Proper Flossing

Flossing is an essential part of the tooth-cleaning process because it removes plaque from between teeth and at the gumline, where periodontal disease often begins.

If you find using floss awkward or difficult, ask your dental hygienist about the variety of dental floss holders or interdental cleaning devices that are available.

Wind 18" of floss around middle fingers of each hand. Pinch floss between thumbs and index fingers, leaving a 1" - 2" length in between. Use thumbs to direct floss between upper teeth.



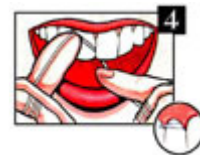
Keep a 1" - 2" length of floss taut between fingers. Use index fingers to guide floss between contacts of the lower teeth.



Gently guide floss between the teeth by using a zig-zag motion. DO NOT SNAP FLOSS BETWEEN YOUR TEETH. Contour floss around the side of the tooth.



Slide floss up and down against the tooth surface and under the gumline. Floss each tooth thoroughly with a clean section of floss.



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