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Dental Guide

The Complete Guide to Your Best Oral Hygiene Routine



Good oral hygiene is the key to preventing tooth decay and gum disease. Unfortunately, many people rush through brushing as they hurry to get to school, work, or into bed. The best oral hygiene routines center on key fundamentals that prevent plaque and reduce the risk of tooth decay. Learn how to properly care for your teeth with these proven dental care tips. Proper oral hygiene is essential for healthy teeth and gums. This includes daily brushing and flossing. In addition, you should see your dentist regularly for dental exams and cleanings. Preventative dentistry gives you the best chance for a beautiful smile and long-lasting oral health.

Brushing Routine

If you're wondering how to have the best dental hygiene possible, it all starts with your toothbrush. It may sound overly simple, but proper brushing habits are the most effective way to improve oral health and preserve it well into the future. For best results, adhere to the following guidelines:

- Brush once in the morning and once in the evening after you have eaten your last meal.
- Brush your teeth for at least two minutes, making sure to give each part of your mouth equal attention.
- Hold your toothbrush at about a 45-degree angle and be sure to brush beneath the gum line.
- Brush every surface of each tooth, including the sides, chewing surfaces, and rear.



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Flossing

The best oral hygiene practices include regular flossing. It's important to use floss to eliminate plaque and food particles that gather between your teeth. If flossing isn't a part of your dental routine, it's time to start now. Best practices include:

- Be sure to floss at least once per day, using whatever type of floss feels most comfortable.
- Wrap each end of the floss around your fingers and gently work it in between each tooth.
- Move the floss against the curve of each tooth to prevent accidental damage to the gums.
- Repeat with each tooth, making sure to wind used floss with one finger and release unused floss from the other.

Cleaning Your Tongue

The best oral hygiene routines involve thoroughly cleaning bacterial buildup from the tongue. This can reduce bad breath and give you a fresh feeling with every breath. For best results, follow these steps:

- Apply a small amount of toothpaste to your toothbrush.
- Brush your tongue in circular motions moving as far back as you can without triggering your gag reflex.
- If you prefer, you can also run floss flat against the surface of your tongue.
- You can also use scraper products, specifically designed for cleaning bacteria and food particles from the tongue.

Using Mouthwash

For even better dental hygiene, consider incorporating mouthwash into your oral health routine. While not necessary, mouthwash can help reduce oral bacteria that cause cavities and bad breath. Best practices include:

- Choose a mouthwash that has the ADA Seal of Acceptance, which shows the product is safe and effective for the purpose claimed.
- Rinse your mouth with mouthwash after you have flossed, brushed, and cleaned your tongue.
- Sip a small amount of mouthwash and swish for about 30 to 40 seconds, being careful not to swallow.
- Spit out the mouthwash and rinse again using clean water if you don't like the taste.



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Regular Checkup

If you're wondering how to improve oral health, the best thing you can do is schedule regular checkups with your dentist. While good oral hygiene can significantly reduce the risk of dental issues, it doesn't provide 100 percent protection. That's why it's important to see your local dentist for regular teeth cleanings and checkups. In addition to removing tartar and plaque, these checkups can help identify minor oral issues in their infancies, before they evolve into costly problems, requiring expensive treatments.

10 Dental Hygiene Tips for Healthy Teeth



Most experts agree that tooth decay and gum disease can largely be prevented with good oral hygiene. However, great dental hygiene doesn't stop at simply brushing and flossing. To maintain healthy teeth and gums, it's important to follow these ten oral hygiene tips.

1. **Brush your teeth twice a day for two minutes.** The American Dental Association recommends brushing for at least two minutes, twice daily, to carefully remove food particles that attract bacteria.
2. **Learn proper brushing technique.** Brushing too vigorously can increase your likelihood of gum recession and damaged tooth enamel. To brush properly, hold your toothbrush at a 45-degree angle in relation to your gums and move your hand in a circular motion.
3. **Floss at least once per day.** Even if you brush twice a day, food particles can still get trapped in the spaces between your teeth. Flossing once a day helps to prevent tartar buildup that contributes to tooth decay and gum disease.



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4. **Visit your dentist at least every 6 months.** Routine dental exams are critical for your dental health. Visiting your dentist twice a year for a routine cleaning and oral exam will help you detect and prevent oral health issues.
5. **Replace your toothbrush every 3 months.** Over time, toothbrush bristles can lose their shape and deteriorate. To thoroughly clean your teeth and gums, swap out your toothbrush every three or four months. If you schedule regular dental exams, your dentist will also provide you with a new toothbrush if necessary.
6. **Consider switching to an electric toothbrush.** There are many types of toothbrushes out there, but certain types are better than others. When deciding on a toothbrush, you may want to consider an electric toothbrush. The electric toothbrush's bristle movement decreases more plaque and gingivitis than manual toothbrushes. If you'd rather use a manual toothbrush, make sure to locate a toothbrush with soft bristles and a small head.
7. **Consider using a fluoride mouthwash.** Use a mouthwash that contains fluoride to prevent tooth decay and kill bad bacteria in your mouth. Do not eat or drink for 30 minutes after using a fluoride mouthwash.
8. **Keep hydrated.** Saliva helps protect your teeth against decay. Drinking water is good for your teeth because it helps wash away leftover food and residue that can cause cavities.
9. **Limit sugary and acidic foods.** Cavity-causing bacteria feed on sugar and produce acid that wears away your enamel. Food acids also soften your tooth material and dissolve the minerals in tooth enamel. By limiting your intake of sugary and acidic foods, you are helping to protect your enamel from erosion.
10. **Eat crunchy fruits and vegetables.** Crunchy foods, such as apples, carrots, and celery, neutralize sugar content and wipe away plaque-causing bacteria on the surface of your teeth. These vegetables also stimulate saliva flow, which acts as a natural defense against cavities and gum disease.

Final Word:

Your oral health is essential to your overall physical health. It's important to set aside a few minutes every day for your dental hygiene routine. If you have any questions about your oral health, schedule an appointment with your dentist. He or she will be able to identify any oral health issues that require attention and provide treatment options as well as at-home care advice.