

Tips to a smarter oral hygiene routine

Together with your dental professional, decide when, where and how you might clean your teeth and gums each day.

- Set an alarm on your phone to remind you to do it, or do it at the same time everyday
- Keep a diary to record your progress to help keep you motivated
- Ask your dental professional if you can video their instructions so you can watch it at home.

If-Then Plan

It is not always easy to change habits or start something new and there are many obstacles that you might encounter along the way.

Creating an If-Then plan can help you achieve your goals. Here is one example of an If-Then plan:

- If I do not have time to use my interdental brushes in the morning, then I will use them straight after I eat my lunch.

Exercise:

Imagine an obstacle that you might encounter with this new routine and how you might overcome it:

If _____

Then _____



What to expect once you start a new oral hygiene routine?

Some patients notice a difference when they change how they care for their teeth and gums. You may experience the following:

- **Bleeding when you brush:** this should reduce within 7-10 days, with continued brushing twice a day.
- **Sensitivity:** This may be relieved by using and applying a de-sensitising toothpaste.
- **Recession:** You may notice a change to the shape as the swelling goes down and the gums shrink back to health.
- **Gum Colour:** The gums may change to a lighter shade of pink as they heal.



More information on gum health and periodontal disease can be found at: bsperio.org.uk/patients
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Top tips for healthier gums



Your guide to optimum gum health

Treatment of gum disease

Periodontitis (gum disease) is caused by bacteria (biofilm). The biofilm needs to be removed twice a day, at home, to help stabilise the condition of your gums. Treatment of periodontitis will involve some adjustments to how you care for your teeth and gums at home.

In addition to brushing your teeth and gums, you will need to clean the spaces between your teeth every day using the correct size interdental brush (mini brush). In-between cleaning is essential to promote gum health.



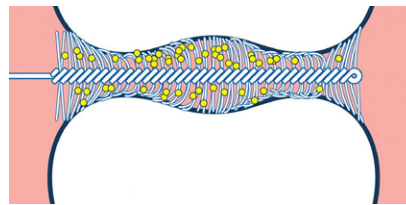
Manual toothbrush technique

- Select a small medium/soft bristle brush.
- Apply a fluoridated toothpaste to the dry brush.
- Position the bristles towards the gum line.
- Angle the bristles at 45 degrees to the gum.
- Move bristles in small circles on one tooth at a time.
- Count five strokes on each tooth before moving to the next surface.
- Brush the outer and inner surfaces, as well as the biting surfaces of the back teeth.
- Spit out but do not rinse with water.
- Repeat morning and evening.



Power toothbrush technique

- Apply a fluoridated toothpaste to the dry bristles.
- Place the bristles at a right angle to tooth.
- Bristles should be tilted towards the gum line at approximately 80-90 degrees (see image above).
- Hold the brush steady on each tooth and count to 5 before moving on to the next tooth surface.
- Brush the outer and inner surfaces, as well as the biting surfaces of the back teeth.
- Spit out but do not rinse with water.
- A chargeable toothbrush is superior to a battery-powered brush in removing plaque.



Interdental Brush (in-Between Brush)

Cleaning in-between the teeth is essential if you have periodontal disease as this is the site where most problems start. These brushes are specifically designed to disturb the bacteria in the gaps between each tooth.

- Hold brush between thumb and index finger.
- Push the brush between your teeth.
- Move the brush using a back and forth motion.
- Insert the brush 5 times into each space.
- Repeat once everyday.
- Brushes should be a snug fit between the teeth.

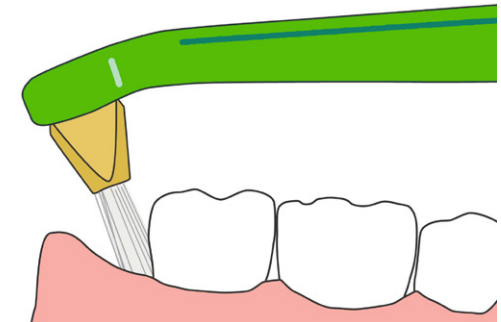
Dental Floss or Tape

Only recommended for spaces that are too tight for an interdental brush. Use daily for best results.

- Hold the floss taut, gently guide between teeth.
- Position it underneath the gum, apply pressure against the tooth.
- Move it along the side of the tooth, away from the gum line to disturb the bacteria.



Single tufted brush



- Hold the brush as you would a pencil.
- Position the bristles gently beneath the gum.
- Apply pressure and rotate the bristles in small circles under the gum.
- Repeat daily for best results.

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