



Flossing & Brushing

To have good dental health, you need a mix of personal dental care, and the care of your dentist.

Flossing

Flossing removes plaque and bacteria that you cannot reach with your toothbrush. If you don't floss, you are missing more than one-third of your tooth surface. Plaque is the main cause of gum disease. It is an invisible bacterial film that develops on your teeth every day.

Within 24 to 36 hours, plaque hardens into tartar (also called calculus), which can only be removed by professional cleaning. Floss at least once a day, and plaque never gets the chance to harden into tartar. Getting into the habit of daily flossing is easier when you floss while doing something else like watching TV or listening to music, for example.

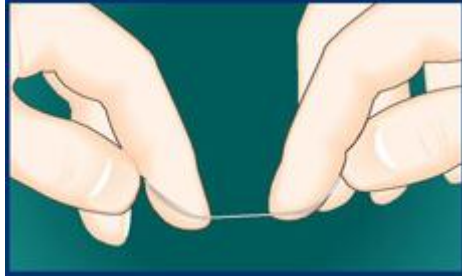
How to floss your teeth

Step 1

Take a length of floss equal to the distance from your hand to your shoulder.



Wrap it around your index and middle fingers, leaving about two inches between your hands.



Step 2

Slide the floss between your teeth and wrap it into a "C" shape around the base of the tooth and gently under the gumline. Wipe the tooth from base to tip two or three times.



Step 3

Be sure to floss both sides of every tooth. Don't forget the backs of your last molars. Go to a new section of the floss as it wears and picks up particles.

Step 4

Brush your teeth after you floss - it is a more effective method of preventing tooth decay and gum disease.



Flossing Problems and Solutions

Gums sometimes bleed when you first begin to floss. Bleeding usually stops after a few days. If bleeding does not stop, see your dentist. Floss can shred if you snag it on an old filling or on the ragged edge of a tooth.

Try another type of floss or dental tape. Ask your dentist or dental hygienist for advice. If your floss still shreds, see your dentist.

Brushing

Regular, thorough brushing is a very important step in preventing tooth decay and gum disease. Brushing removes the bacteria that promote tooth decay and the plaque that can cause gum disease.

Ideally, you should brush after every meal, because the bacterial attack on teeth begins minutes after eating. At the very least, brush once a day and always before you go to bed. Brushing your teeth isn't complicated, but there is a right and a wrong way.

How to brush your teeth

Step 1

Brush at a 45 degree angle to your teeth. Direct the bristles to where your gums and teeth meet. Use a gentle, circular, massaging motion, up and down. Don't scrub. Gums that recede visibly are often a result of years of brushing too hard.



Step 2

Clean every surface of every tooth. The chewing surface, the cheek side, and the tongue side.

Step 3

Don't rush your brush. A thorough brushing should take at least two to three minutes. Try timing yourself.



Step 4

Change your usual brushing pattern. Most people brush their teeth the same way all the time. That means they miss the same spots all the time. Try reversing your usual pattern.



Step 5

Use a soft brush with rounded bristles. The right toothbrush cleans better. Choose a size and shape that allow you to reach all the way to your back teeth. There are many different types of brushes, so ask us to suggest the best one for you. CDA recommends you replace your toothbrush every three months.

Please feel free to call us anytime at 604-939-3368, or ask us any questions that you might have about this topic when you come in for your next visit.

Best regards,

Dr Aidin Ghotbi and Mint Dental staff