

## Oral Hygiene

Good oral hygiene is important to prevent the onset of periodontal (gum) disease and bad breath. Periodontal disease has been linked with heart disease and diabetes. Optimal oral hygiene and regular six monthly maintenance appointments are therefore essential to maintain your general health and wellbeing.

Maintaining the health of your teeth and gums helps to prevent extensive dental treatment and possible tooth loss. Your mouth will look and feel good.

### Brushing

Brushing aims to remove the soft, sticky plaque (called a bio film) that constantly forms on your teeth. Plaque contains bacteria and causes periodontal disease and tooth decay. You will need to brush your teeth at least twice a day. Using an electric brush is the most effective way to do this.

### Electric Toothbrushes

Ideally your electric toothbrush should have a timer. When brushing with a manual brush, one should brush for at least five minutes however you can achieve the same efficiency with an electric brush in two minutes. Never apply too much pressure when brushing and let the electric toothbrush make contact with the whole tooth as well as the border of the gum. Remember to replace your heads every three months. You can purchase Oral B Braun electric brushes and replacement brush heads here at Cannon Hill Dental at the wholesale price.

### Manual Toothbrushes

If you do choose to use a manual toothbrush it must have a small head with soft bristles. Use either small round circular or small jiggle movements- never horizontally or backwards and forwards as this can lead to wearing down of the tooth enamel. Point the bristles at a 45 degree angle to the teeth and the border of the gums. Incorrect tooth brushing techniques using a manual brush can cause more harm than good

### Toothpaste

In choosing a toothpaste, the only necessity is that it contains fluoride. Fluoride helps to toughen teeth and prevent decay. Sensitive toothpaste can be beneficial if required.

### Disclosing Tablets

Disclosing tablets are a great way to detect plaque left on your teeth. After brushing, place one in your mouth and it will stain any plaque that has been left on your teeth. Any

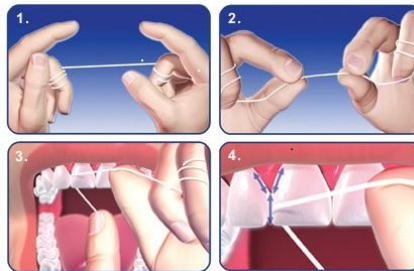
remaining plaque can then be brushed off.

### Flossing

The only way to clean the contacts in between your teeth is by flossing once a day. If your gums bleed when you start, don't be alarmed. Continue to floss daily and your gums should improve.

#### Flossing Technique

- Break off 30-45 cm of floss.
- Wind the ends around the middle fingers and the thumb.
- See-saw the floss between your teeth then wipe the floss up and down to scrape each



side of the tooth.



If you are having difficulties, floss holders are available for easier handling.

### Piksters (Interdental Brushes)

Piksters are small brushes that can be used to help clean in between teeth. They are shaped like a mini bottle brush and come in a variety of sizes.

These brushes are especially useful when orthodontics braces are in place or where there are larger spaces between the teeth, normally caused by bone loss associated with periodontal disease. It is still necessary to use floss are well to clean the contacts in between your teeth.

## Oral Hygiene Tools

