

# Oral Health Tips

Maintaining good habits between seeing the dentist is important. Have a read of the following oral health tips and integrate them into your daily routines.

## **Tip 1: Use of Tongue Scrapers**

The second highest amount of bacteria found in the mouth are on the surface of the tongue . For a fresh feeling mouth, why not try a tongue scraper daily. Widely used in the Asian subcontinent, this oral hygiene measure is fast gaining popularity on the western world.

## **Tip 2: Use of Floss and Interdental Brushes**

Use of floss or interdental brushes on a DAILY basis is recommended. The use helps remove plaque from areas of your teeth missed even by the most expensive electric toothbrushes. It's an extra step towards reducing the risk of gum disease and tooth decay.

## **Tip 3: Use Fluoridated Non-Alcoholic Mouthwash**

Rinse for 1 minute with a fluoridated non-alcoholic mouthwash once a day at a separate time to tooth brushing. After spitting out, do not rinse with water and do not eat or drink for 20 minutes. This extra dose of fluoride to the teeth helps to fight tooth decay!

## **Tip 4: When Brushing...**

Brush with a fluoridated toothpaste twice daily. Spit out but don't rinse out with water or mouthwash. This will help keep you decay free!

## **Tip 5: Chewing Gum**

Chew sugar-free chewing gum after meals to increase your salivary flow. This rapidly raises the pH of your saliva towards neutral. At neutral the teeth will no longer be damaged by the effects of acid produced by oral bacteria.

## **Tip 6: Identifying Plaque**

Plaque is a film of bacteria that forms on the tooth surface and is responsible for the two most common oral diseases – gum disease and tooth decay. Plaque can be difficult to see as it is tooth coloured. PlaQSearch plaque disclosing tablets, available at Victoria Road Dental Clinic, are fantastic oral hygiene aids. Red stains represent recent deposits and blue stains old. Regular use can help refine oral hygiene procedures

## **Tip 7: Eating Fruit**

As we all know, fruit is regarded as a healthy snack. But remember – fruit sugar can be in part responsible for tooth decay. Fruit is recommended to be eaten with or immediately after meals. This way you can get all the benefits of fruit without any unwanted damage to your teeth.

## **Tip 8: Whitening Toothpastes**

A number of patients with sensitive teeth are using whitening toothpaste. In general these toothpastes are more abrasive than conventional ones. Whilst the toothpaste removes stains, it also microscopically removes tooth surface. Sadly, this leads to the yellowing of the teeth as the white enamel is abraded, leaving the more yellow dentine layer of the tooth more apparent.

**Tip 9: Parafunction**

Clenching/clamping/grinding teeth together, especially whilst sleeping, seems to be becoming more common. Signs include: Scalloping of tongue margin, ridges and white lines on cheek, headaches, ringing in the ear, clicking jaw, painful jaw, reduced mobility of jaw, difficulty chewing, locked jaw, crack lines on teeth, fractured teeth and/or poor sleep. Problems can be controlled or alleviated by good advice and the careful use of mouth splint