



Caring for Your Teeth and Gums

A healthy mouth is an important part of a healthy body. To keep your mouth healthy and free of disease, visit your dentist regularly. Between visits eat a well-balanced diet and practise a good oral health routine that includes

proper brushing and flossing every day.

When you brush and floss, you are removing plaque. Plaque is an invisible and sticky film that forms on your teeth every day. It contains bacteria (germs) and is the main cause of cavities and gum disease. The only way to remove plaque is by brushing and flossing your teeth.

Brush your teeth and tongue twice a day, and always before you go to bed to remove the bacteria that causes tooth decay. Tooth decay is a serious disease that starts just below the surface of the tooth. If left untreated, this disease can damage the structure of the tooth and eventually lead to a cavity (hole) in your tooth. Here's how. When sugars in the foods and drinks that you consume mix with the bacteria in plaque, this makes a mild acid. This acid forms in the plaque, causing tooth decay to slowly eat away at the enamel (hard outer layer of your tooth). Over time, the enamel gets soft and a cavity forms.

Floss your teeth every day. 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. If plaque is not removed from around your gums, it hardens into tartar and can cause gum disease. Tartar can only be removed by professional cleaning by your dentist or another member of the dental team. It cannot be removed by brushing or flossing.