Digital guide to... Better brushing

Why is brushing important?
Brushing your teeth twice a day helps to remove plaque from your teeth and gums. Plaque is a thin, sticky film that contains bacteria which can cause tooth decay and gum disease. Over time, this can lead to tooth loss.

The type of toothbrush
Choosing the right toothbrush is important for effective plaque removal. Manual toothbrushes come in a variety of shapes and sizes, and some may be more suitable for people with limited movements or disabilities. Electric toothbrushes can be more effective at removing plaque but may also be more expensive.

Going electric
Electric toothbrushes can be more effective at removing plaque than manual toothbrushes, but they may also be more expensive. Electric toothbrushes come in a variety of shapes and sizes, and some may be more suitable for people with limited movements or disabilities.

Bleeding gums
Bleeding gums can be a sign of gum disease. It is important to see your dentist if you have bleeding gums or if you notice any changes in the way your teeth fit together.

Changing the toothbrush
It is recommended to change your toothbrush every three to four months, or sooner if the filaments become worn. Changing your toothbrush regularly helps to prevent the buildup of plaque and bacteria.

How to brush

1. **Brush the outer surfaces of your teeth.** Angle the brush 45 degrees against your gumline and move it back and forth. Make sure to reach all the way to the back of your mouth. Use a small circular motion at the gumline.

2. **Brush your tongue.** This helps to remove bacteria that can cause bad breath. It's a good idea to brush your tongue every day.

3. **Brush your teeth and gums.** Use a gentle, circular motion at the gumline to make sure you're getting all the plaque and food particles off your teeth and gums. Brush all surfaces of your teeth, including the inside and outside surfaces.

4. **Brush all your teeth.** Make sure you're brushing all of your teeth, not just the front ones. This helps to prevent cavities and gum disease.

5. **Rinse your mouth.** After brushing, rinse your mouth with water to help remove any remaining food particles and plaque.

Other things you can do

- **Floss your teeth.** Flossing helps to remove food particles and plaque from between your teeth where brushing can't reach.

- **Use a mouthwash.** A fluoride mouthwash can help reduce plaque and prevent cavities.

Where to go for more information

Please visit the National Smile Month website, where you can learn more about our amazing campaign and how to get involved.

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www.smilemonth.org