

# Daily Oral Hygiene Tips



For most of us, thorough daily oral hygiene lays the groundwork for a healthy smile. Just a simple routine of *brushing* and *flossing*, in addition to regular *dental checkups*, can be enough in most cases to help prevent tooth decay, gum disease and bad breath.

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## *Brushing Up on Technique*

Since there are various techniques for brushing your teeth, it's a good idea to ask your dentist which one to use. Here are a few tips to help you develop a good brushing routine:

- ◆ Brush twice a day.
  - ◆ Use a fluoride-containing toothpaste to help prevent tooth decay.
  - ◆ Place your brush at a slight angle toward the gums when brushing along the gum line.
  - ◆ Use a gentle touch—it doesn't take much pressure to remove the plaque from your teeth, and a vigorous scrubbing could irritate your gums.
  - ◆ Concentrate on cleaning all the surfaces of the teeth.
  - ◆ Brushing your tongue gently can help remove bacteria that cause bad breath.
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## *The Importance of Hygiene*

Cleaning between your teeth is every bit as important as brushing. Since brushing can not effectively clean between teeth, it's important to use floss to get to those areas.

- ◆ Other items also are available to help you clean between your teeth. Ask your dentist which ones to use.
- ◆ Clean between your teeth once a day.
- ◆ As with brushing, use a gentle touch to avoid injuring your gum tissue.

### **WANT TO KNOW MORE?**

There is a wealth of information on dental care at your fingertips. Just go to the American Dental Association's website ([www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org)) and click on the "Patients & Consumers" content area for more discussion about dental hygiene, oral health or the ADA Seal of Acceptance.

