

Oral Health Tips:

Brought to you by the Delta Dental
of Oklahoma Oral Health Division

Simple tips and routines to help you keep that healthy smile for years to come.

It all starts with flossing!

While brushing your teeth twice a day will go a long way toward maintaining oral health, you're not getting the optimal cleaning if you leave the floss unused in the back of your medicine cabinet.



And if you are one of those people who doesn't floss because you find it awkward to maneuver the floss between your teeth, a number of products can help you get the job done.

To prevent decay and periodontal (gum) disease, you must remove plaque, the sticky, naturally occurring layer of bacteria that builds up on all surfaces of your teeth. Dental floss gets between your teeth, where toothbrush bristles cannot reach, and gets rid of plaque between the teeth and underneath the gum line. So in addition to brushing your teeth gently, at least twice a day, with special attention to the gum line, it's vital to floss at least once a day to remove plaque.

If you have trouble flossing, ask your dentist or hygienist for advice on how to do it best.



What you need to know to keep a happy and healthy smile!

» Carbonated beverages are a significant cause of cavities in teens – so watch what you drink and brush frequently during the day.

» Smoking cigarettes is one of the greatest contributors to an unhealthy mouth. Smoking also interrupts calcium absorption in the body and can also cause potentially life-threatening diseases such as oral and lung cancers.

» Sports-related injuries account for about 5 million lost teeth per year. Protect you and your children's teeth with a mouth guard whenever playing sports.

» A small amount of fluoridated toothpaste will help to inhibit decay. Fluoride is also found in mouth rinses, community water supplies, and in some foods.

» Schedule regular oral health appointments starting around your child's first birthday. Your oral health professional will check for cavities in the primary teeth and watch for developmental problems, as well as help to create a positive experience that may alleviate fear at future visits.

» Determine if the water supply that serves your home is fluoridated. If there is not fluoride in your water, discuss supplement options with your dental hygienist.

» Fluorine, from which fluoride is derived, is the 13th most abundant element and is released into the environment naturally in both water and air.

» Fluoride is naturally present in all water. Community water fluoridation is the addition of fluoride to adjust the fluoride concentration of a community's water supply.

» Fluoridation of community water has been credited with reducing tooth decay by 50% - 60% in the United States since World War II.

» Fluoride's main effect occurs after the tooth has erupted above the gum. This topical effect happens when small amounts of fluoride are maintained in the mouth in saliva and dental plaque.

» Of the 50 largest cities in the United States, 43 have community water fluoridation. Fluoridation reaches 62% of the population through public water supplies, more than 144 million people.

» Consumption of fluids – water, soft drinks, and juice, accounts for approximately 75 percent of fluoride intake in the United States.

» Brushing is the key to good dental health, fighting gum disease, and a healthy, beautiful smile for life. Remember to brush for at least two minutes twice a day, morning and night.

» It is best to floss before brushing to remove plaque and loosen debris from the tooth surface.

» Visiting the dentist at least twice a year for professional cleanings is imperative for dental health and to maintain your healthy, beautiful smile.

» Choose beverages like milk, which help strengthen teeth and help build stronger enamel, giving you a healthy, beautiful smile.

» Tired of prying your way in every time it's time to brush the tot's teeth. Why not reverse roles and let the child brush yours? Then you can laugh a lot and show how much fun it is to be pampered.

» Expectant mothers can suffer from pregnancy gingivitis caused by hormonal changes and increased blood flow in the body. Women planning a pregnancy should have their teeth cleaned to remove gingivitis and get a periodontal screening.

» Using a mouthwash can reduce plaque that causes gingivitis and kill germs that cause bad breath, leaving your breath feeling fresh and clean.

» Avoid sticky sweets that stick to your teeth and cause cavities, such as taffies and soft candies. Don't chew on ice, hard candies or other hard materials that can crack your teeth.

