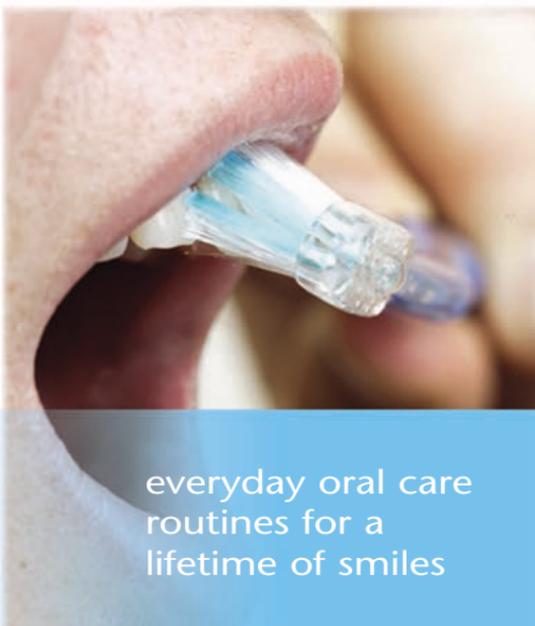
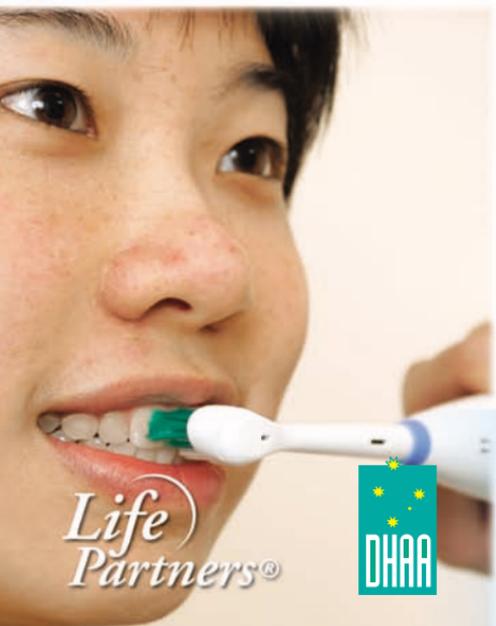


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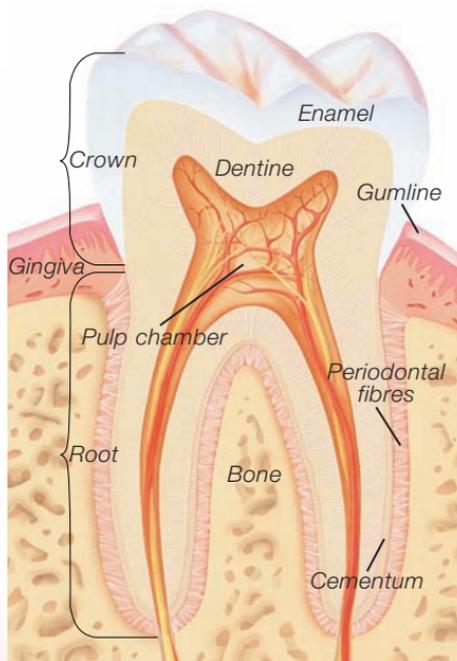
Everyday care routines are essential for maintaining good health. A toothbrush, toothpaste and floss are the basic tools you need to keep your teeth and gums healthy for life. Mouthrinses can provide added benefits.

teeth & gums in health and disease

The crown of the tooth (the part that can be seen in the mouth) is covered with enamel. Enamel forms a hard, protective covering over the softer “dentine” that makes up the bulk of the tooth. Deep inside the tooth are nerves and blood vessels.

Tooth decay is the result of loss of minerals from enamel and dentine. A white spot on the tooth near the gums may be an early sign of loss of minerals. At the early stage, minerals can be replaced with the help of fluoride. If minerals continue to be lost, a hole (cavity) forms in the tooth and a filling is needed to repair the damage.

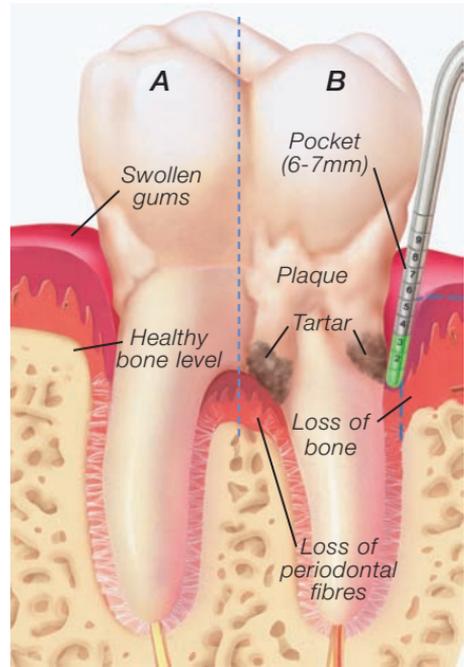
Beneath the gums, the root of the tooth is covered with a thin layer called “cementum”.



Normal tooth anatomy

Fibres between the cementum and bone hold teeth in place. Healthy gums are pink, firm and do not bleed. "Gingivitis" means the gums look red and puffy (inflamed) and may bleed when brushed or flossed. Gingivitis can be reversed by careful brushing and flossing.

"Periodontitis" means that the fibres that hold teeth to bone and the bone around teeth are breaking down. When the fibres break down, "pockets" form between the gum and the tooth, making it more difficult to clean around the tooth. Damage to the bone and fibres may be permanent if not treated early. However, even severe periodontitis usually responds to treatment and can be stopped from getting worse.



Gum diseases (above):

A – Gingivitis: red, swollen, bleeding (inflamed) gums

B – Periodontitis: loss of bone and periodontal fibres creating "pockets" between teeth and gums

bacteria and plaque

To keep your teeth and gums healthy, plaque needs to be removed each day.

Plaque is the sticky, soft layer of bacteria that forms on teeth everyday. Bacteria in plaque form acids when we eat sugary or starchy foods, when we drink sugary drinks, or when we take medicines with high levels of sugar. These acids cause tooth decay.

The bacteria in plaque also produce chemicals that cause the gums to become inflamed and can affect the bone and fibres that hold teeth in place.

If plaque is not removed each day by brushing and flossing, the plaque can harden to form calculus (tartar). Calculus cannot be removed by brushing or flossing. Calculus traps more plaque and makes it more difficult to keep teeth clean.

You can use disclosing tablets or solution occasionally to help see the plaque you might be missing. These products are available in pharmacies.



Before disclosing



After disclosing (showing plaque)



toothbrushing

Studies have shown that brushing twice a day using fluoride toothpaste reduces the risk of tooth decay much more than brushing only once a day. It is especially important to use fluoride at night because less saliva is available during sleep to protect teeth against tooth decay.



Place brush at 45 degree angle to the gum – use gentle circular motion at the gumline



Brush the outside surfaces and the inside surfaces of all the lower teeth



Brush the outside surfaces and the inside surfaces of all the upper teeth



For the chewing surfaces, use a firm back and forth motion

Here are some tips to make toothbrushing most effective:

- Always use a SOFT toothbrush (a hard brush can damage teeth)
- Use a gentle, circular motion at the gum line (Don't scrub!)
- Don't apply pressure – let your brush do the work!
- Brush in a set pattern so that you don't skip around and miss any teeth
- Brush every tooth surface – outside (the surface next to the cheeks/lips), inside (the surface next to the tongue/roof of mouth) and the chewing surface
- Change your toothbrush regularly





flossing

Floss is the best tool to clean between teeth where a toothbrush can't reach. If flossing proves difficult, aids such as floss holders, interdental brushes and toothpicks may help.

How to use floss –



- Take about 45cms of floss and wind the ends around the middle or index fingers
- Grip the floss firmly with the index finger and thumb



- Guide the floss between the teeth using a gentle sawing motion. Be careful not to snap the floss onto the gums.

- Gently scrape each tooth using an up and down motion but be careful not to snap the floss onto the gums



Up and down on one tooth



Up and down on the other tooth

- Unwind the floss when needed to ensure that a clean piece is used for every tooth
- Floss in a set pattern so that you don't skip around and miss some teeth – don't forget to floss behind the very back teeth

toothpaste

With today's diets, saliva alone is not enough to prevent tooth decay for most people. Fluoride is also needed each day. For most people, using a fluoride toothpaste twice a day and drinking water that contains fluoride daily will provide enough protection. However, additional fluoride protection may be needed if your risk of tooth decay is higher due to:

- medical conditions that affect saliva
- frequent intake of sugary or acidic foods or drinks
- taking medicines that are high in sugar or that affect saliva
- conditions that interfere with daily oral hygiene routines
- lifestyle changes that affect diet or oral hygiene



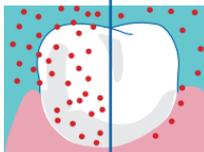
Children under 6 years of age should use a low fluoride toothpaste such as My First Colgate®. Toothpaste should always be stored out of the reach of children.



Some toothpastes, such as Colgate® Total, contain both fluoride and an antibacterial agent. Colgate Total contains a unique triclosan/copolymer formula to give 12 hour antibacterial protection.

how fluoride works

No Fluoride | Fluoride



1. Reduces the formation of plaque acids



2. Helps prevent mineral loss caused by plaque acids



3. Promotes re-mineralisation of early decay

mouthrinses

Mouthrinses are becoming increasingly popular. There are different types of mouthrinses for different purposes.

- Some contain ingredients such as chlorhexidine, which kills bacteria that cause gum disease and tooth decay
- Some contain fluoride for additional protection against tooth decay
- Some contain other ingredients such as hydrogen peroxide to freshen breath or help remove debris around teeth



Mouthrinses do not replace the need to brush and floss everyday! Your dental professional can tell you more about mouthrinses and advise you on your needs.

Mouthrinses are not recommended for children under 6 years of age. Rinses should always be stored out of the reach of children.

regular dental visits

It is important to keep in mind that your risk of tooth decay and gum problems can change at different times in your life for many reasons. You may need to use additional oral care products from time to time, as advised by your dental professional. Regular dental visits can help you stay on top of your changing needs and prevent little problems from becoming big ones.

This brochure is brought to you by the Dental Hygienists' Association of Australia Inc. and Colgate.



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Information in this brochure is current as at October 2005

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