

The Daily Battle For Healthy Teeth

Caring for your teeth is more than just going to the dentist's office twice a year—it's the daily care you provide that makes the biggest difference. Let's look at some of the basics of keeping your teeth healthy.

Eat Starches And Sweets Less Often

Every time you eat, bacteria living in your mouth perk up and start pumping acid. They live in a sticky film called plaque, which clings to your teeth. When you eat, the bacteria produce lots of acid, attacking the enamel covering and irritating your gums. For 20 minutes after you eat, the attack is intense. That's why it's best to brush right after eating. And the more often you eat, the more acid attacks your teeth suffer. By the way, sweets are especially notorious for causing plaque problems—you'd be wise to cut back!

Clean Between Your Teeth Daily

To floss, wrap most of about 18 inches of floss around one middle finger. Wind the other end around your other middle finger. As you floss, unwind clean floss, winding up the dirty floss on your other finger. It's like tape going through a video.

Use your thumbs and fore-fingers to hold the floss. Gently slide the floss behind a back tooth, wrapping around it in a C shape, down at the gum line. Tighten and pull up away from the gum. Repeat, and move on, flossing both sides of each tooth. Your goal is to detach plaque from your teeth. Some dentists recommend brushing after flossing, to remove the loosened plaque.

Flossing is easy once you get the hang of it, but there are other options. Your dentist can show you how to use interdental brushes, picks, or sticks.

See your dentist at least every six months. Most dental problems are invisible and painless in the early stages. Only a professional can tell if you've got cavities growing or gum disease developing. And treatment is much easier and healthier if you catch it early. Pay now, not later—you'll save in the long run.

Brush After Eating

Use a soft-bristled brush that can easily maneuver inside your mouth and a fluoride toothpaste. Place the toothbrush where the tooth and gums meet, tilting toward the gums. Gently move the brush back and forth using small circular movements. Brush all the surfaces of your teeth, including the insides. Brush your tongue to prevent bad breath. And remember to replace your toothbrush at least every few months. Old bacteria can live on a brush, so never share one.

Do You Need To See A Dentist?

T	F	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	My gums bleed when I try to floss.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I avoid foods that are hard to chew.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have sores in my mouth that don't heal.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	My teeth hurt when I bite down.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I haven't been to the dentist in over a year.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	My breath is bad a lot of the time.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lately my teeth are more sensitive to cold or hot.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have a loose tooth.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	My gums are receding from my teeth.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have a bad taste in my mouth.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	My teeth ache.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have discolored patches in my mouth.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have trouble swallowing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have swollen gums, jaw or neck.

If you answer yes to ANY of the above questions, go see a dentist! **Remember, it's cheaper, quicker, and healthier to take care of dental issues early on!**





GET THAT BODY MOVING!

AS YOU PROBABLY ALREADY KNOW, the benefits of exercise are vast and may vary from person to person. Losing weight, increasing energy levels, and keeping your body healthy and in shape are just a few of the many reasons to start and continue exercising. While your motivation to get started may be different from those listed above, the important thing is to get moving! But before you do, here are some important points to keep in mind.

↪ CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR FIRST ▶▶

Before you start any weight loss or exercise program, talk it over with your doctor. Your doctor can help with your meal plan and exercise program, and check to make sure that you do not have any physical conditions that might be affected by the exercise program or activity you have chosen. In general, most doctors will encourage you in your decision to lose weight and become healthier. They may even offer to monitor your progress so that you can see other medical benefits, like reductions in your cholesterol and blood pressure.

↪ BEGIN WITH A GRADED EXERCISE PROGRAM ▶▶

Start off your exercise program slowly and gradually. Your body will adapt to the exercise you are giving it if you give it the time it needs. Go too fast, though, and you may have to stop to recover from injuries that have appeared because your body was not ready to cope with the stress. Also remember that you may not be the young athlete you used to be. Don't expect to take up where you left off in high school and be just as good or just as strong. Be patient, and you will be amazed at how quickly you get back into your old exercise routine.

↪ FOCUS ON TECHNIQUE ▶▶

Your time spent exercising will show better results if you focus on technique instead of work load. Don't let your desire to work at the next level lead to you doing exercises or activities incorrectly. Poor technique can lead to injuries and reduce the benefits of the exercise being performed. For example, leaning forward or using your arms to hold you up when exercising on a stair climber, not only puts your body in a bad posture for the exercise, but also reduces the load on your legs during exercise. In this case, you are better off reducing the load you work at so that you can maintain the correct posture.

↪ TRY CROSS TRAINING ▶▶

Cross Training is a great way to begin exercising without placing too much stress on one part of the body. For example, if you run one day, try swimming or cycling the next. This allows different muscles to be used while still getting the overall weight loss benefits of aerobic exercise. This switching of exercise activities can help you stay interested in exercising as well. For example, doing a number of different activities for a shorter period of time in succession is a good way to work through exercises and activities that you find difficult. These activities are often a lot easier to complete if you know you only have to do them for a short period of time, and that there is another activity that you enjoy following it.

↪ KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PROGRESS ▶▶

One of the best ways to see the progress you have made is to record the exercise you have done and note your improvements. You can keep track of the number of times you exercise, the length of time you exercise, what activities you did, how hard you exercised, and how you felt while you were exercising. If you prefer seeing your improvements in a chart, pick one aspect of your training, like how long you exercise during your workout, and plot that over time. Seeing yourself get better will keep you excited about exercising and encourage you to keep improving.

↪ ENJOY EXERCISING ▶▶

Do everything you can to make sure you enjoy exercising. Find friends that want to do that activity with you. Change activities regularly so that you don't get bored with what you are doing. Join a club if you would like to be with others when you do your activity and get the equipment you need to make sure you have no excuses for not doing your exercise. Find out what makes exercise fun and rewarding for you and then do everything you can to make sure your exercise time has those things. If you use this approach to exercise and activity, you will ensure that exercise becomes something you want to do, rather than something you just have to do.

