Toothbrush Abrasion

The dangers of toothbrush abrasion

We all know that we need to brush and floss every day. Proper brushing removes food debris and bacteria from the teeth. Improper brushing, though, can be abrasive and destructive, causing problems like:

- Receding gums
- Wearing away of the tooth root
- Sensitive teeth
- Weaker teeth



Wearing of tooth structure

Change your habits—brush properly

Sometimes it's hard to tell if you're brushing destructively, and brushing habits can be hard to break. To avoid destructive tooth brushing, keep these factors in mind:



Use a soft toothbrush

A soft toothbrush
Choose a soft toothbrush. A soft toothbrush also makes it much easier to remove the plaque below the gumline, where periodontal disease starts. You can make the bristles even softer by running hot water over them before use.

A non-abrasive toothpaste with fluoride
Use a pea-sized amount of non-abrasive toothpaste with fluoride. Toothpastes that are labeled "whitening" or "tartar control" can sometimes be too rough on receding gums and exposed roots, wearing away the root's protective layer. You can be sure a toothpaste is non-abrasive if it's labeled "sensitive."

Proper technique
Use proper brushing technique. Angle the bristles of the brush along the gumline at a 45-degree angle and apply just enough pressure so the bristles slide under the gumline. Vibrate the brush while you move it in short back-and-forth strokes and in small circular motions.

Gentle brushing
Don't brush too hard. If you're not sure whether you're pressing too hard, hold the end of the brush with two fingers. That will give you enough force to get the job done without doing damage. You can also check your brush bristles. If they're bent over or broken, you've probably been pressing too hard. If you find that you have a hard time brushing gently, consider using an electric toothbrush. They make it much easier to use less pressure.

If you have any concerns about your brushing, talk to us. We can show you what you need to know to keep your mouth healthy and bacteria-free without damaging your teeth.

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