Brushing

Whether you use a manual toothbrush or an electric toothbrush, proper tooth brushing involves these things:

The proper tools

A soft toothbrush
A soft brush is kinder to your teeth and gums, and also makes it much easier to remove the plaque below the gumline, where periodontal disease starts.

Toothpaste with fluoride
Use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste that contains fluoride. Fluoride hardens the outer enamel layer of the teeth. It might stop a cavity in its tracks and will give you more resistance to future cavities.



Angle the brush



Brush tongue gently

The right technique

The correct angle of brushing
Angle the bristles of the brush along the gumline at a 45-degree angle and apply gentle 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. Brush two or three teeth at a time, and then move to the next teeth, allowing some overlap. To brush the backs of the front teeth, tilt the brush and use the tip of the brush.

Brushing in a pattern
It's fine to brush in any regular pattern you choose, but since the insides of the teeth tend to get less attention, you might start with the insides of the upper teeth, then go to the insides of the lower teeth. Next, switch to the outsides of the upper teeth, and then the outsides of the lower teeth. Brush the chewing surfaces of the upper teeth, then the lower teeth, and end by gently brushing your tongue and the roof of your mouth. This removes bacteria and keeps your breath fresh.

Good timing

Brushing after breakfast and before bed
The timing of your brushing is important, too. Brushing after breakfast cleans away the morning's food debris, and prevents the bacteria that naturally live in your mouth from leaving behind the destructive acid they produce when they digest that food. And brushing your teeth before bedtime protects your teeth all night.

Using these brushing techniques, your teeth and gums will stay fresh and healthy.

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