

# KEYSTONE

PERIODONTICS & IMPLANTOLOGY

## Oral Hygiene Instructions

Maintaining periodontal (gum) health depends on **consistent daily oral hygiene**. Proper brushing, flossing, and plaque control are essential to prevent cavities and gum disease that can lead to tooth loss.

### BRUSHING

- Brush twice daily (morning and evening), ideally 30 minutes after meals, for 2 minutes each time.
  - Time yourself at first so you become familiar with what 2 minutes of brushing feels like.
  - Electric toothbrushes (non-battery operated) have built-in 2-minute timers—start the brush and allow it to complete the full cycle without turning it off (it turns off automatically after two minutes).
- Divide your mouth into four quadrants:
  - Upper right, Upper left, Lower right, Lower left
  - Spend 30 seconds per quadrant.
- Brushing technique is critical:
  - Angle the toothbrush bristles 45 degrees toward the gum line
  - Use gentle, circular or vertical motions (up and down, not side to side)
  - Use downward strokes for upper teeth and upward strokes for lower teeth
  - Brush all tooth surfaces: front, back, and chewing surfaces.
  - Brush all the way to the gum line, which may vary between teeth and require careful visualization.
  - Do not apply excessive pressure. Gentle brushing for two minutes is sufficient.
- You may use any toothpaste you prefer. Be aware that all whitening toothpastes are highly abrasive and may damage tooth structure with long-term use.
- Always use a soft-bristle toothbrush. Avoid medium or hard bristles.
- Incorrect angulation or aggressive brushing over time can cause tooth abrasion and gum recession, leading to:
  - Tooth sensitivity
  - Increased risk of cavities
  - Potential tooth loss

### FLOSSING

- Flossing is required daily and is just as important as brushing.
- Periodontal disease often begins between the teeth, where toothbrushes cannot reach.
- Floss at least once daily, focusing on mechanical removal of plaque and food debris.
- Technique:
  - Pass the floss gently below the contact point
  - Curve the floss into a “C” shape around each tooth
  - Clean both sides of every space (each space has two surfaces)
- If you have spaces or gaps between teeth, interdental brushes (such as TePe®) may be more effective than floss alone—especially after periodontal treatment.  
Example of interdental brush: <https://www.tepe.com/global>
  - Interdental brushes come in different sizes; your dental professional can help determine the correct size(s) for you.

## **MOUTHWASH**

- Mouthwash is an adjunct to brushing and flossing and is not required.
- If you enjoy using mouthwash, you may continue unless advised otherwise by your dental professional

## **WATER FLOSSERS**

- Water flossers are an adjunct, not a substitute for flossing.
- They can be helpful if you have:
  - Larger spaces between teeth
  - Fixed orthodontic appliances (braces)
  - Persistent periodontal pockets after treatment

**Consistent daily care is essential for long-term periodontal health.**

**If you have questions or need personalized guidance, please consult your dental provider.**