

THE PROPER



WAY OF



TOOTH BRUSHING

AS EASY AS IT MAY SEEM TO DO, VERY FEW OF US BRUSH OUR TEETH AS WELL AS WE COULD. THANKFULLY, WHERE THERE ARE MISTAKES, THERE ARE WAYS TO FIX THEM.

1. YOU PICK THE WRONG BRUSH.



How do you choose from the mind-melting selection of brushes at your local supermarket?

Make sure your brush can cover the places that need covering. That's everywhere you should be able to reach with a toothbrush. It can be a power toothbrush or a manual one.

2. YOU GO TO TOWN ON YOUR TEETH.

When it comes to brushing, harder isn't better.

One of the biggest issues that people have is that they try to scrub their teeth too hard. They feel like if they really don't go at the teeth, like they're trying to clean the grout in their bathroom tile, that they're not doing the right job.



3. YOU RUSH.



You should brush at least twice a day for 2 minutes each time. But you're late for school or work. Or you want to get to bed. Once in a while, you need to cut that brushing short.

4. YOU HOLD ON TOO LONG.

When you find a good toothbrush, it's sometimes hard to give it up. But when you see changes in the bristles -- when they become discolored, bent, or dirty looking -- it's time to chuck the brush.

It loses its powers when the bristles become frayed. So change it at least every 3 to 4 months. Also, it's smart not to share your brush with anyone else. And keep it in the open air to keep mold or bacteria from growing on it when it's wet.



5. YOU GO BACK AND FORTH.



It's a common brushing boo-boo -- going along your teeth, left to right. Again, think massage, not scrub.

Start from the gum, and go up and down in little circular, up-and-down motions.

6. YOU FORGET THE GUM LINE.

Bacteria often hang out where your tooth meets your gum. We miss that area a lot.

You have about a millimeter of gum tissue where your tooth comes outside your gum, you want to kind of get under there, just about a millimeter, maybe 2 or 3 millimeters, right under the gum. So the bristle needs to be able to bend.



7. YOU GO IN TOO SOON.



It's tempting, sometimes, to immediately bolt to the restroom to get rid of the remnants of that meal you just scarfed down. That's better than not brushing at all.

You have the acid sitting in your mouth and now you're using abrasives. So you're kind of helping the acid erode away your tooth."

But how long should you wait? 15 or 20 minutes. That's long enough for the saliva in your mouth to do its work on the acid before you dive in.

Or rinse out your mouth with some water, to get rid of some of that acid before you brush.

8. YOU DON'T MAKE ONE TIME WONDERFUL.

Brush at least twice a day, at least 2 minutes each time. Every day. Don't let up.

But maybe just as important is to make sure that at least one of those times is exceptional. That's brushing, flossing, mouthwash, the whole bit.



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