

Top dental tips for the family



(Smile:Together)



Brush your teeth twice a day!

Once during the day **but most importantly before bed.**

- ★ Children need help to brush until they are old enough to tie their own shoelaces or until approximately 8 years of age.
- ★ You should brush for a **minimum of 2 minutes** using a timer. There are fun mobile phone apps available to download which will help with tooth brushing - why not have a look!
- ★ Remember to brush all surfaces - outside, inside, biting surfaces and on the gums.
- ★ Always use fluoride toothpaste on your brush; a smear for under 3 year olds and a pea sized amount for over 3's.
- ★ **Spit don't rinse!** - not even with water (the more contact teeth have with the toothpaste the better!)
- ★ Replace your toothbrush at least once every 3 months.
- ★ You should visit a dentist at least once a year for a check up.
- ★ Always ask for sugar free medicine from your doctor or pharmacist.
- ★ If the bristles of the tooth brush are spread out or flattened then you are putting too much pressure on when cleaning - replace your toothbrush and brush more gently.
- ★ Drinks - Water, milk, tea and coffee (without sugar) are great, you should avoid fizzy, sugary drinks including smoothies and milkshakes.
- ★ Only give your child **milk** in a feeding bottle - bottles should be given up by the age of one. From 6 months old use a beaker with a **free-flow lid** or an **open cup** with still water only - for more advice ask your health visitor.
- ★ Avoid eating sweet or sugary snacks between meals unless it's a treat - eat 3 healthy meals a day to allow your mouth to recover from acid attack (for great healthy eating advice check out **www.cornwallhealthyweight.org.uk**)
- ★ Smoking creates gum problems - this can cause wobbly teeth and smelly breath.

To register with a NHS dentist in your area please phone **03330063300**