



Opening Hours:

- Mon 8:30am - 7:30pm
- Tue 8:30am - 5:30pm
- Wed 8:30am - 5:30pm
- Thu 8:30am - 7:30pm
- Fri 8:30am - 5:00pm
- Sat 8:30am - 1:00pm

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Patient Education

ABOUT TEETH

Throughout your life, you will have two sets of teeth: primary (baby) teeth and secondary (permanent) teeth. At age 6-8 months, the primary teeth appear; all 20 are in place by age 3.

Permanent teeth will begin to grow around age 6, and except for wisdom teeth, are all present between ages 12 and 14. The next teeth to grow in are the 12-year molars and finally the wisdom teeth. Wisdom teeth typically begin breaking through from age 17 and on. The total number of permanent teeth is 32, though few people have room for all 32 teeth. This is why wisdom teeth are usually removed.

Your front teeth are called incisors. The sharp "fang-like" teeth are canines. The next side teeth are referred to as pre-molars or bicuspid, and the back teeth are molars. Your permanent teeth are the ones you keep for life, so it is vital that you brush and floss them regularly and that periodic check-ups by a dentist are followed.

ORAL HYGIENE

Brushing

Use a toothbrush with soft bristles and a small strip of fluoride toothpaste. When you brush your teeth, move the brush in small, circular motions to reach food particles that may be under your gum line. Hold the toothbrush at an angle and brush slowly and carefully, covering all areas between teeth and the surface of each tooth. It will take you several minutes to thoroughly brush your teeth. Brush up on the lower teeth, down on the upper teeth and the outside, inside and chewing surface of your entire front and back teeth. Brush your tongue and the roof of your mouth before you rinse.

Brush your teeth three times daily to avoid the accumulation of food particles and plaque:

1. In the morning after breakfast
2. After lunch or right after school
3. After dinner or at bedtime.

As soon as the bristles start to wear down or fray, replace your toothbrush every 3 months. Do not swallow toothpaste; rinse your mouth thoroughly with water after you finish brushing. It is important to carefully floss and brush daily for optimal oral hygiene.

Flossing

For areas between the teeth that a toothbrush can't reach, dental floss is used to remove food particles and plaque. Dental floss is a thin thread of waxed nylon that is used to reach below the gum line and clean between teeth. It is very important to floss between your teeth every day.

Pull a small length of floss from the dispenser. Wrap the ends of the floss tightly around your middle fingers. Guide the floss between all teeth to the gum line, pulling out any food particles or plaque. Unwrap clean floss from around your fingers as you go, so that you have used the floss from beginning to end when you finish. Floss behind all of your back teeth.

Floss at night to make sure your teeth are squeaky clean before you go to bed. When you first begin flossing, your gums may bleed a little. If the bleeding does not go away after the first few times, let a staff member know at your next appointment.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Bad Breath (Halitosis)

Daily brushing and flossing helps to prevent the buildup of food particles, plaque and bacteria in your mouth. Food particles left in the mouth deteriorate and cause bad breath. While certain foods, such as garlic or anchovies, may create temporary bad breath, consistent bad breath may be a sign of gum disease or another dental problem.

Gum Disease

Gum, or periodontal, disease can cause inflammation, tooth loss and bone damage. Gum disease begins with a sticky film of bacteria called plaque. Gums in the early stage of disease, or gingivitis, can bleed easily and become red and swollen. As the disease progresses to periodontitis, teeth may fall out or need to be removed by a dentist. Gum disease is highly preventable and can usually be avoided by daily brushing and flossing. One indicator of gum disease is consistent bad breath or a bad taste in the mouth.

Sensitive Teeth

Your teeth expand and contract in reaction to changes in temperature. Hot and cold food and beverages can cause pain or irritation to people with sensitive teeth. Over time, tooth enamel can be worn down, gums may recede or teeth may develop microscopic cracks, exposing the interior of the tooth and irritating nerve endings. Just breathing cold air can be painful for those with extremely sensitive teeth. Possible solutions include using a desensitising toothpaste, or the dentist can put a thin layer of filling to cover the sensitive or worn enamel area.

Orthodontic Problems

A bite that does not meet properly (a malocclusion) can be inherited, or some types may be acquired. Some causes of malocclusion include missing or extra teeth, crowded teeth or misaligned jaws. Accidents or developmental issues, such as finger or thumb sucking over an extended period of time, may cause malocclusions.

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