

Oral Health: Quick Reference Guide

Information for patients

Brush Twice Daily

- **When:** Once before bed, once after breakfast.
- **Duration:** 2 minutes each time.
- **Why:** Prevent plaque buildup and tartar formation.

Toothbrush Tips

- Manual or electric - both effective if used correctly.
- Choose a **small head**, angled bristles, **soft/medium firmness**.

Toothpaste

- **Adults:** 1,350–1,500 ppm fluoride.
(this is labelled on the toothpaste tube/box)

Brushing Technique

1. Hold brush at **45° angle** to gumline.
2. Use gentle circular strokes.
3. Clean outer, inner, and chewing surfaces.
4. Divide mouth into 4 sections (30 sec each). **Do not rinse immediately after brushing** - preserve fluoride. 'Spit don't Rinse'.



Flossing

- Floss **before brushing** to remove plaque and food debris.
- Alternatives: interdental brushes (avoid toothpicks).

Mouthwash

- Use **alcohol-free fluoride mouthwash**.
- Not immediately after brushing; best midday.
- Avoid eating/drinking for 30 mins after use.

Diet & Lifestyle

- **Balanced diet:** fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein.
- **Limit sugar**, especially between meals.
- Avoid sugary drinks - even sugar-free fizzy drinks can erode enamel.
- **Smoking & alcohol:** increase risk of gum disease, staining, and mouth cancer.
- **Vapes:** Research on vapes is at an early stage in comparison to other health-harming commodities such as alcohol and drugs, and the potential long-term harms are unknown.