

Dr Ben Atkins' top ten oral health tips for National Smile Month

12.05.2020 | ARTICLE

National Smile Month is here, and the campaign is all about gaining a better quality of life through better oral health.

For the campaign, Philips are joining the Oral Health Foundation to help communicate important messages about the value of great oral health.

You can never underestimate the how important it is to look after your mouth and the benefits go far beyond a healthy smile.

Improving your oral health may just take a few simple changes and to help you do that, here are my top ten tips for fantastic oral health.

1. Brushing twice daily with a fluoride toothpaste

Brushing your teeth twice daily with a fluoride toothpaste is an essential part of any great oral health routine.

Using a fluoride toothpaste when you brush will strengthen your tooth enamel (the outer surface of your teeth), making it more resistant to tooth decay.

2. Brush with an electric toothbrush

Moving from a manual to an electric toothbrush can really help you improve how well you clean your teeth when you brush twice daily.

Electric toothbrushes are proven to be better at removing plaque, cleaning your teeth and gums. This helps to reduce your risk of tooth decay and gum disease.

3. Spit but don't rinse

When you finish brushing your teeth, spit out the excess toothpaste but do not rinse your mouth out with water.

This allows the remaining fluoride on your teeth to continue providing you with protection even after you've brushed your teeth.

4. Changing your toothbrush/brush heads regularly

A worn brush head can't clean your teeth effectively and may even damage your gums.

Make sure you change your toothbrush every two to three months, or even sooner if the bristles become splayed.

5. Daily interdental cleaning

Your toothbrush cannot reach all the tight nooks and crannies between your teeth where food can get lodged and plaque can build.

To help combat this and keep gum disease at bay, use interdental brushes or floss at least once a day.

6. Try using a fluoride mouthwash

In addition to brushing twice daily with an electric toothbrush and a fluoride toothpaste, using a fluoride mouthwash can also provide a welcome boost to your oral health.

Using mouthwash can help clear the mouth of debris, prevent build-up of harmful plaque and freshen your breath in the process. Just don't be tempted to use it as a replacement for brushing.

7. Limit your sugar consumption

All sugar can cause decay. It's important to limit how much and how often you have anything containing sugar.

Look after your teeth by limiting your sugary snacks and drinks to mealtimes only.

8. Beware of snacking between meals

Snacking on sugary or acidic foods between meals can be very harmful for your oral health.

If you do need to snack between meals, try having things like nuts, cheese or breadsticks, which are non-acidic and have little or no sugar.

9. Try sugar-free chewing gum

Did you know that saliva is the mouth's natural defence against acid?

Chewing sugar-free gum helps the mouth produce more saliva, so it's always good to keep some around, especially when you can't brush your teeth.

10. Visit your dental team regularly, as often as they recommend

Once dental practices can safely reopen, visiting your local dental team on a regular basis can only mean good news for your oral health.

They can give you advice on how to maintain great oral health at home and appointments are a great opportunity to raise any queries or concerns you have.

Achieving great oral health may only be a few simple changes away and by making these changes, you can open the door to a healthier, happier and longer life.

For more information, please head to [www.smilemonth.org or www.philips.co.uk/habits-for-life].