



*Tips & Tricks For
Teeth & Gums*



Dear Oakville Dental Patient

During the COVID-19 pandemic, most of us have experienced stress and disruption to our daily routines. Many of our dental appointments were rescheduled or cancelled. Now, as we transition back into regular and delayed appointments, we understand that some of our patients may have concerns and questions.

Here at **Oakville Dental** we want to assure you that we are taking the precautions necessary to keep our patients and staff safe by following the guidelines set out by our Colleges and Public Health. Rest assured we are looking forward to welcoming you back into our office but know that it will take time to see everyone we have missed over the last few months. To help our patients at home, the dental hygiene team has come up with some tips for at-home care and provided some links to resources that may be beneficial to you.



Some basic at-home care tips to follow to ensure your oral health is maintained:

Brush your teeth twice a day for a minimum of two minutes

It is important that you brush every surface of each tooth; to make this easier, try dividing the mouth into quadrants. This means upper right side, upper left side, lower right side, and lower left side. Next, we must also ensure that the right technique is used to prevent damage to any surrounding tissues. To do this, use small circular motions and angle the brush on roughly a 45-degree angle towards the gums when brushing. If possible, we suggest an electric toothbrush to help aid in thorough brushing.





Floss daily.

This is an important step in oral hygiene. Many patients believe that it is enough to just brush your teeth. It is important to understand that the toothbrush will remove what is on the surface - however, it is unable to remove any particles that may have become lodged in between the teeth. If not removed, these particles can start to create decay and gum issues. To correctly floss, insert your floss of choice between the teeth and establish which tooth will be flossed first. Wrap the floss around the tooth in a “C” shape and move the floss up and down 3-4 times. Raise the floss a little to get just underneath the gum line and do the same up and down motion. Note that when a patient begins to floss for the first time, the gums may bleed and you may have some sensitivity - this can often be normal and will stop after a few days, once the gums become adjusted. If the issue is persistent, then consult with our Dental Hygiene team.

Replace your toothbrush head/toothbrush

(ideally every 3-6 months)

Damaged toothbrush heads/toothbrushes will not clean the surfaces of your teeth and instead can cause damage to the surrounding gums. Aside from this, replacing your toothbrush will ensure that it remains clean. Another rule to remember during these times is to replace the toothbrush if you have been sick - even if the toothbrush is not worn.



Maintain a healthy diet

Unhealthy eating habits may have developed due to the stress of the pandemic. Were you eating more sweets than usual or craving unhealthy foods? This change in diet can impact your oral health.

Carbohydrates found in many foods, when combined with the bacteria found in your mouth, can create acid which can then affect your teeth. Ways to reduce this “acid attack” on your teeth are to choose water as your drink of choice, include proteins or fats in your meals, and choose healthy snacks like apples, nuts, or plain yogurt.



Use other dental hygiene products like mouthwash, oral irrigators, interdental cleaners, or tongue cleaners everyday

Using other hygiene products along with your regular products in your daily routine can really benefit your overall oral health. The use of mouthwash, irrigators, interdental cleaners, and tongue cleaners can eliminate bacteria on other surfaces that may get missed by your daily dental hygiene products. The important thing here to remember is that these other products should be used with your daily dental hygiene products, and not instead of.



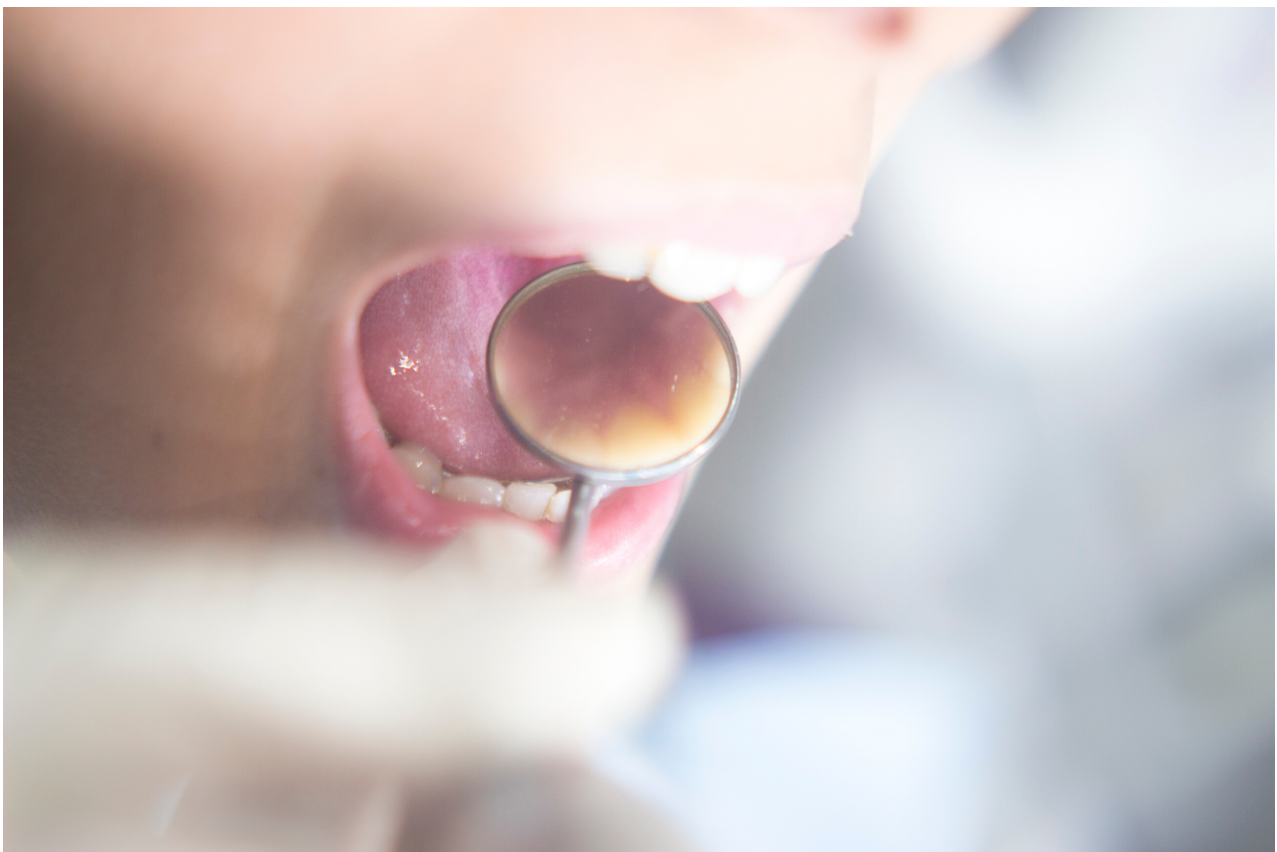
Keep hydrated

Ensure that you keep well hydrated, especially now that the warm weather is here. Not only is this good for your whole body but it plays a big role in the oral cavity as well. Hydration allows for saliva flow. Saliva is important as it acts as a buffer on the teeth and prevents particles from sticking onto the teeth and creating decay.



Regularly examine the inside of your mouth for any abnormalities.

Although regular checkups right now may not seem like an option to you, it is important that while you are at home you regularly check for any abnormalities. At a dental appointment, your hygienist will check your teeth and gums to make sure everything is normal; between visits self-exams can be beneficial for overall health. If there is something abnormal or strange do not hesitate to call the office and get it checked out.



These at-home care tips are just some basic steps to follow while you wait to book your hygiene appointment to ensure your oral health is maintained. We hope that you keep safe and look forward to seeing you in our chair in the near future!

Other resources available:

Denture care:

https://files.cdha.ca/dhcanada/seniors/DENTURE_CARE_helpful_hints.pdf

Caregiver denture care:

https://files.cdha.ca/dhcanada/seniors/DENTURE_CARE_caregiver.pdf

How to care for your child's teeth:

<https://files.cdha.ca/dhcanada/kids/Brushing-Kids-Teeth.pdf>