Oral Health Between Hygienist Appointments | Core Dental

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/looking-after-your-oral-health-between-hygienist-appointments/

Details:

Between hygienist appointments, brush your teeth at least twice a day for about two minutes each time with a soft-bristled toothbrush, and clean between your teeth with floss once a day. Brushing alone does not remove plaque or food debris from between your teeth. At Core Dental we recommend a check-up and clean with your dentist and hygienist about every six months, because regular visits help catch early signs of dental disease before it progresses. Your own interval may differ.

How often should you see the dentist and hygienist?

We recommend visiting your dentist and your dental hygienist for a check-up and clean about every six months. Regular appointments help prevent the need for extensive dental work later by catching early signs of dental disease before it progresses. Your dentist will tailor the interval to your own oral health risks, so some people need to come more or less often.

How often should you brush, and for how long?

Brush at least twice each day for approximately two minutes each time. You can use a gentle circular motion or an electric toothbrush. Gentle, thorough brushing along the gum line matters more than pressing hard.

What type of toothbrush should you use?

Choose a soft-bristled toothbrush. Hard and medium bristles can be too harsh on the gums and may damage them. If you are unsure which brush suits you, our hygienists and dentists can show you at your next visit.

How often should you floss, and why?

Floss once a day. Brushing alone does not remove plaque or food debris from between your teeth, and flossing reaches the areas a toothbrush cannot.

What is the right way to floss?

Grip each end of a length of floss between your thumbs and forefingers. Slowly work it between two teeth in a gentle sawing motion, reaching just below the gum line, and be gentle so you do not damage your gums. If you find flossing difficult, ask us about other ways to clean between your teeth.

How can you plan your care with our team?

A useful first step is to tell us about your concern, any symptoms and your goals when you book. Bring relevant medical information and a current list of medicines. Our team can then check your teeth, gums, bite and surrounding tissues, take imaging when it is clinically appropriate and explain which options suit you.

It is reasonable to ask what the recommended approach is meant to achieve, whether there are alternatives, and what preparation, aftercare and risks are involved. Time, fees and maintenance vary with each person's diagnosis, and a written treatment plan helps you compare stages and payment arrangements before you go ahead.

Call 000 immediately for uncontrollable bleeding, difficulty breathing or swallowing, a serious facial injury or other life-threatening symptoms. For severe tooth pain or swelling without these emergency signs, contact your dental practice promptly.

What does a hygienist actually do at your appointment?

Two things, and the second one lasts longer than the first.

At Core Dental our dental hygienists look after your gums and teeth by thoroughly removing tartar with specialised equipment. Tartar, also called calculus, is hardened plaque, and once it has hardened no amount of brushing will shift it.

The second part is instruction tailored to you. That includes suggesting which type of toothbrush, floss and mouth rinse will suit your lifestyle and needs. There is a range of different oral hygiene instructions to cater for each individual, and the routine that suits someone with healthy gums and no appliances is not the routine that suits someone with gum disease or braces.

Once you have been taught how to maintain your oral hygiene at home, it is up to you to carry those instructions out. That is the part of your oral health that happens on the other 364 days.

Which products might be recommended for you?

Different situations call for different tools, and this is why the recommendation is personal rather than general.

Where floss will not reach

Where the gaps between teeth are too large for floss to clean effectively, we recommend interdental brushes such as Piksters, which reach into spaces conventional floss slides past.

Where there is gum disease

Patients with periodontal disease may also need a specialised mouth rinse, such as Curasept or Savacol, to help disrupt the formation of harmful bacteria in the mouth and to promote healing of the gums. Such patients might also benefit from a good-quality electric toothbrush, which helps ensure all areas of the mouth are reached consistently.

Where there are braces

Patients with braces benefit from regular professional cleans, because the movement of their teeth can be hindered by stubborn tartar. At home, Superfloss is recommended, as it can be passed easily between the wires, and a specialised orthodontic manual toothbrush may also be suggested.

Where there are dentures

Denture wearers use a proprietary denture cleaner on the appliance, and should take their dentures out at night to let the gums breathe. Ask us which product to use rather than relying on toothpaste, which is too abrasive for a denture surface.

Why should mouth rinse be alcohol free?

Because alcohol dries the mouth, and a dry mouth is a higher-risk mouth.

Saliva buffers acid, washes away food debris and carries the minerals that help repair early enamel damage. A rinse containing alcohol works against that by drying out the oral cavity, so where a rinse is recommended it should always be alcohol free.

Flossing should be done once a day. It is also crucial that you follow the oral hygiene instructions your dental hygienist has put together specifically for you, rather than a general routine, since those instructions exist because of something they found in your mouth.

When should children start seeing a hygienist?

From around age two, once most of the first teeth are through.

Parents of children with most of their first teeth should be taking them to the dentist or hygienist to have their teeth looked at and cleaned, and the usual age to start is two years. The hygienist will also teach your child how to brush and floss at home, which is often more effective coming from someone other than a parent.

An oral hygiene routine is a habit that helps maintain a healthy mouth for life, and it is easier to establish young than to correct later.

What does good home care actually save you?

Money and time, in that order.

Good hygiene practice at home can prevent dental cavities and gum disease, which means avoiding both the cost and the time spent trying to reverse those conditions once they are established. Gum disease in particular is far easier to prevent than to treat, and the early stages are reversible in a way the later stages are not.

Your gums are the foundations of your teeth. Looking after them is the single highest-value thing you can do between appointments.

Frequently asked questions

Is brushing twice a day enough to keep my teeth healthy?

Brushing twice a day for about two minutes is a sound foundation, but it does not reach between your teeth. Daily flossing or other cleaning between the teeth, together with regular check-ups and cleans, helps look after your whole mouth.

Should I use a hard toothbrush to remove more plaque?

No. Hard and medium bristles can be too harsh on the gums and can damage them. A soft-bristled brush used gently, with good technique, is the usual recommendation. Ask your hygienist to check your technique.

Can I skip flossing if I use an electric toothbrush?

An electric toothbrush can make brushing easier, but it does not replace cleaning between your teeth. Plaque and food debris still collect in those gaps, so floss or another interdental tool is generally still recommended once a day.

Do I need to see a hygienist as well as my dentist?

Many people see both. A hygienist focuses on cleaning and gum care, while your dentist checks for decay and other concerns. Read more in our article on whether you should see a hygienist as well as your dentist .

What if my gums bleed when I floss?

Gums can bleed when they are inflamed, and persistent bleeding is worth having checked. Keep cleaning gently and book an appointment so we can examine your gums and advise you.

What are Piksters, and when would I need them?

Interdental brushes. They are recommended where the gaps between teeth are too large for floss to clean effectively, because floss tends to slide past a wide space rather than clean its sides.

Why does my mouth rinse need to be alcohol free?

Because alcohol dries the mouth, and saliva is what buffers acid, clears debris and carries the minerals that repair early enamel damage. A drying rinse works against the thing you are trying to achieve.

How should I floss with braces?

Superfloss is recommended, as it can be passed easily between the wires, and a specialised orthodontic manual toothbrush may also be suggested. Regular professional cleans matter more with braces too, since stubborn tartar can actually hinder the movement of the teeth.

At what age should a child first see a hygienist?

Usually around two years, once most of the first teeth are through. The hygienist checks and cleans the teeth and teaches the child how to brush and floss, which often lands better coming from someone other than a parent.

Related services and further reading

Dental hygiene

Dental check-ups

What does a hygiene appointment involve?

Should I see a hygienist as well as my dentist?

Cleaning between the teeth

Brushing teeth: are you doing it right?

How often should you change your toothbrush?

How to keep your gums healthy

How can we help?

If you are due for a check-up and clean, our team can help at any of our nine Core Dental clinics. Call 13 13 16 or book online. You can also read about what to expect at your first Core Dental appointment .

Core Dental at a glance

Nine Core Dental clinics across Melbourne: Southbank, South Melbourne, Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Epping, Wyndham, Berwick, Bayside and Glenferrie.

Open six days a week: Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings.

We quote before treatment starts and offer interest-free payment plans.

Call 13 13 16 or book online.

Contact Core Dental

Phone	13 13 16
Booking	Online through coredental.com.au, or call 13 13 16
Hours	Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday mornings, Sunday closed
Clinics	Southbank , South Melbourne , Caroline Springs , Carrum Downs , Epping , Wyndham , Berwick , Bayside , Glenferrie

This article is general in nature and does not replace advice from a registered dental practitioner who has examined you. Results, recovery times and potential risks vary for each individual. This information is intended for people over 18. Seek advice from a qualified, AHPRA-registered practitioner before proceeding.

How often does Core Dental recommend a check-up and clean?

We recommend a check-up and clean with your dentist and hygienist about every six months. Regular visits help catch early signs of dental disease before it progresses, though your dentist may suggest a different interval based on your needs.

For how long should I brush my teeth each time?

Brush for about two minutes each time, at least twice a day, using a gentle circular motion or an electric toothbrush. Our Core Dental hygienists can check your technique during your clean and suggest changes if needed.

Which toothbrush bristles do dentists recommend?

Soft bristles are recommended. Hard and medium bristled toothbrushes can be too harsh on the gums and may damage them. The Core Dental team can recommend a brush that suits your mouth at your

next appointment.

Why is flossing necessary once a day?

Brushing alone does not remove plaque or food debris from between your teeth, so cleaning there once a day fills the gap. Our Core Dental dentists and hygienists can show you a technique that suits you.

How do I use dental floss correctly?

Hold the floss between your thumbs and forefingers, then slowly work it between two teeth in a gentle sawing motion, reaching just below the gum line. Be gentle to avoid damaging your gums. Core Dental hygienists can demonstrate.

How many Core Dental clinics are there?

Core Dental has nine clinics across Melbourne: Southbank, South Melbourne, Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Epping, Wyndham, Berwick, Bayside and Glenferrie. Call 13 13 16 or book online to find the clinic nearest you.

When are Core Dental clinics open?

Our clinics are open Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings, and closed on Sunday. Saturday hours finish at 1.30pm, and Bayside opens at 8.30am on Saturdays. Call 13 13 16 to confirm your clinic.

How do I book a hygienist appointment at Core Dental?

Call 13 13 16 or book online through coredental.com.au. Let our team know you would like a check-up and clean and mention any concerns, and we will arrange a time at the clinic that suits you.