



“The Tooth and Nothing but The Tooth”

by
Chris ‘Dr. Smile Maker’
Branfield

Life Changing Dentistry - Back to Basics

Hi there. How are you getting on with the tooth brushing technique? Did you have a go? I hope so.

I have realised that I have been writing “The Tooth..” for over a year now. How time flies eah? I have enjoyed it and would like to thank all the team at *Cottingham Times* for their support. I would also like to thank you for reading it and hope that you enjoy it and get something out of it. As I write I am a little apprehensive about England’s last, must win, group match in the football world cup. I do hope that at the very least they put in a good performance to save a bit of face as well as give us something to cheer about and celebrate. Here’s hoping.

Going All High Tech? Don’t Get Splattered

The tooth brushing method that I described last time was with a manual toothbrush. However, the technique can be modified slightly when using an electric toothbrush. The difference is that you do not

need to agitate the bristles yourself once you have got them down to the gum line as the brush will do this bit for you.

Top Tip: The other thing to note is that when you put the toothpaste on to spread it round the mouth I wouldn’t switch the brush on. If you have the brush on outside the mouth you run the risk of getting splattered with toothpaste. I like the oral B electric tooth brushes as seem to be the most cost effective and also have some independent research to suggest that may be more effective than a manual brush. You don’t have to get the all singing and dancing model that wakes you up and makes you a cup of tea in the morning as the more basic models do very well. The battery ones are not that good as they lose their power quite quickly. You are better off with a rechargeable one so it is fully charged each time.

So Many Nooks And Crannies

So we have tooth brushing pretty much nailed I think. What about the areas that a tooth brush cannot reach? If you think about it, in a mouth that has teeth touching, there are a lot of areas that the bristles of a toothbrush, manual or electric, cannot reach. So, what do you do? In the majority of cases I think that the best thing is to use dental tape. If you don’t clean these areas you are missing quite a high percentage of the surface area of the teeth and gums.

I’ve Heard Of Flossing But What Is Tape?

Dental tape is almost the same as floss but wider and flatter. I like it for a few reasons. Firstly, it doesn’t seem to dig in your fingers as much as floss. Secondly, because is it wider it seems more efficient at lifting off the gubbins from the teeth. Thirdly, if you do have a little mishap whilst using tape it doesn’t have quite the cheese cutter effect that floss can have.

Don’t Tie Yourself In Knots

You only really need to clean in between the teeth once a day. It does not really matter when you do it but I tend to do it before I brush last thing on a night. However, if you have been to a party and had a few sherbets I would give it a miss and wait until the morning.

Top Tip: To use dental tape efficiently and effectively you need to have a short length between your fingers, finger and thumb or thumbs (whichever is most appropriate to you) at a time. Also pull this short length tight. In this manner you have much more tactile feedback and control over the tape. You can feel when you have taken the tape through the contact and put the brakes on without traumatising the gum. You do this by having a good size length of tape and wrapping around your middle fingers to secure it. Then using a short length at a time work it between the teeth and then gently under the gum using the tooth as a guide until you feel resistance. Whilst doing this you wrap the tape around the tooth up to 180 degrees and wipe long the tooth surface away from the gum to remove the plaque. Whilst you are between the teeth feed a clean bit through your fingers so you have another short length and repeat with the tooth next door. You can then remove the tape from between these two teeth and repeat between two other teeth.

Top Tip: If you have a tight contact between two teeth have the short length of tape pulled tight and use a sawing action to move through the contact. Once through the contact STOP the sawing action and use as above. If you need any more advice on using dental tape please do ask your dentist or hygienist. We probably could have done with a picture or two. I’ll see what I can do for next time. I do hope that you don’t tie yourselves up in knots.

The girls at the practice all completed the course for race for life. Well done everyone. Their current project is cups of tea or coffee to raise money for Marie Curie so you are welcome to drop in for a cuppa. I must be having a bit of a mid life crisis as I’m off for a few days to Koblenz in Germany on the back of a motorbike, which is a first for me. Wish me luck. I hope I return safely to write in next months issue. Take care and be good.

Chris

Chris Branfield is Principal Dentist at Castle Park Dental Care, 8-9 Castle Green, Cottingham, telephone 01482 848428. He has been in dental practice for over 17 years and has a special interest in life changing dentistry with dental implants and cosmetic dentistry. www.castleparkdental.co.uk

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