

# WATCH YOUR MOUTH!

**A** stunning smile is the most attractive accessory. Protect your precious pearly whites with these dental dos and don'ts.

Our mouths are portals to pleasure. Tasting, talking, eating, kissing and grinning are all possible because of our amazing mugs. When these delights are threatened by decay, pain and infection suffering ensues. Especially when bacteria migrates to other areas, such as the heart and lungs. Prevention and proactive care is key to oral health. It's never too late to uproot the problem by becoming a dental hygiene machine. Try these teeth tips to smile like a Cheshire cat.

**TIP #1 Keep it clean:** A pure mouth promotes a pure body. Dental hygiene options abound on shop shelves. But what's essential for optimal oral health? Your perfect teeth kit includes pulling oil, floss, a toothbrush, toothpaste or powder, a tongue scraper, mouthwash, breath freshener and xylitol gum.

According to Ayurveda the ideal routine is in this order. On waking and before bed do oil pulling, floss teeth, brush, scrape

## TIP #2: BRUSH IT OFF

Brushing every day keeps the dentist away. Simply rinse your mouth after a meal and brush after thirty minutes to avoid driving acid into the teeth. Kids under six can't competently cleanse their own choppers. Dentists recommend brushing for about two minutes with a soft bristle brush. Electric toothbrushes give a more thorough clean but damage gums if applied vigorously. Toothbrushes need to be replaced once bristles splay out, after a cold or every three months. This results in Australians discarding over 30 million plastic toothbrushes to landfill annually. An environmental alternative is organic, biodegradable antibacterial bamboo toothbrushes. Their BPA free bristles are designed to clean between teeth and along the gum line.



tongue and gargle mouthwash. After snacks use neem toothpicks and chew xylitol-sweetened gum to increase salivation, reduce cavities and plaque. Thirty minutes after every meal floss and brush. This regime will give you champion chompers and overall wellbeing.

**TIP #3 Oil Pulling:** If you want fresh breath, great gums, luscious lips and white teeth try oil pulling. Oil pulling draws out acidity and mouth microbes such as streptococcus and candida which increase mouth ulcers, cavities and bad breath. Simply combine one tablespoon

## TIP #4: FLOSS LIKE A BOSS

Did you know that 35 per cent of your teeth's surfaces can only be cleansed by flossing? It takes twenty seconds of flossing to reduce millions of microorganisms clinging to teeth. Avoid toxic dental flosses made from Teflon, petroleum-based nylon and coated in synthetic wax. Choose floss forged from natural fibres and coated with bees wax. Prevent periodontal disease by curving it around the tooth and gently gliding up and down.



organic coconut oil with ½ tablespoon black sesame oil, ¼ teaspoon turmeric and one drop clove essential oil. Swill in your mouth gently for ten minutes then spit in the bin to avoid blocked drains. Rinse with a natural mouthwash then scrape tongue, floss and brush.

**TIP #5 Kissing clean:** Our mouths absorb substances sublingually so we need to avoid toxic ingredients such as parabens, triclosan, sodium lauryl sulfate, artificial sweeteners, fluoride, and diethanolamine. As alcohol obliterates good oral bacteria it's detrimental in mouthwashes. A simple mouthwash is ¼ teaspoon Himalayan salt diluted in a cup of water. Also colloidal silver makes a great antibacterial mouthwash!

Try this DIY dental powder - combine one teaspoon each of green clay, bentonite and plant calcium powder then add ¼ teaspoon each of activated charcoal, clove and cardamon powders. Mix into a glass jar and sprinkle onto wet toothbrush for a sparkling smile.

**TIP #6 Talking tongues:** The tongue is rich turf for bacteria, plaque and food residue. A clean tongue makes every mouthful a taste explosion and every word a fresh breeze. Scraping your tongue protects your teeth, gums and body from bacteria. It helps to clear respiratory problems by reducing toxins. A copper tongue scraper is soft on the tongue with antimicrobial and enzyme activating actions. It reduces sulfur compounds that cause bad breath, improves taste, freshens breath, clears toxins and stimulates digestion. Use every morning before drinking but after brushing and flossing your teeth. Gently scrape the tongue from back to tip five times then rinse.



**TIP #7 Enamel enemies:** Enamel eating foods to reduce include white flour, fizzy drinks, juice, sugar, honey and vinegar. Foods that stick to teeth promote plaque such as chips, dried fruit, popcorn and hard candy. Rinsing with water after these reduces their affect. If you have delicate teeth avoid munching on ice, corn cobs and hard foods. To dodge discolorations avoid smoking, tannins in coffee/tea, red wine, tomatoes and beetroot. Try drinking juice, lemon water or carbonated drinks through a straw. Conventional teeth bleaching weakens enamel so opt for natural alternatives.

**TIP #8 Teeth treats:** Gum chums include celery, chia, coconut oil, goat's milk, almonds and alkalisng foods. Remineralise teeth with calcium, magnesium, vitamins A and D, phosphorous and fibre. Reduce bad bacteria with probiotics, propolis and antibacterial essential oils. ☺

*Caroline Robertson strives to spread smiles with naturopathic and Ayurvedic consultations and classes.*  
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