

## Partners for Better Oral Hygiene

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### **Who are the partners?**

Dental health begins with good oral hygiene. This requires professional care and guidance provided by your dentist and dental hygienist, combined with proper care at home by you. That's the partnership. When you follow a recommended home care routine and have regular professional care, you will be able to maintain healthier teeth and gums.

### **Why you need a prophylaxis (professional cleaning).**

Professional cleaning removes plaque, calculus (tartar), and stain from the teeth. The cleaning may be done by your dentist or dental hygienist, a licensed professional who performs prophylaxis (professional cleaning) in the dental office and provides education in proper care of the teeth and gums.

### **What is plaque?**

Plaque is a sticky film that constantly forms on all areas of your teeth. It is composed of bacteria, by-products of bacteria, and your saliva. Plaque bacteria use sugar and other carbohydrates to grow and to form acids which attack tooth enamel and can cause cavities. Plaque that builds up along the gumline and between teeth in hard to reach places can be harmful. The bacteria in plaque produce toxins that can irritate the gums causing them to turn red, swell and bleed the signs typically associated with gingivitis. Recognizing gingivitis is important because it is reversible. Unnoticed, ignored or simply not taken care of, gingivitis can sometimes progress to a more advanced stage of gum disease called periodontitis.

**It is easy to see why brushing and cleaning between teeth with floss or other interdental cleaners to remove plaque is essential to keep your teeth and gums healthy.**

### **What is calculus (tartar)?**

Minerals in saliva combine with plaque at the tooth surface and harden into a rough, unsightly deposit called calculus (tartar). Calculus, which is mostly mineral, provides a rough surface that makes thorough plaque removal more difficult. Your toothbrush and floss can't remove calculus once it has formed. Calculus can only be removed during a regular dental prophylaxis.

### **What a prophylaxis (professional cleaning) does that you can't do for yourself?**

A prophylaxis is a scaling and polishing procedure performed to remove normal plaque, calculus and stains. While the main objective of the prophylaxis is to help prevent gum disease, it can also improve the appearance of your teeth by making them look clean and bright. Scaling is performed using instruments to remove calculus from the teeth. Polishing with a special paste by means of a motorized instrument removes remaining plaque and surface stains caused by various foods, beverages and tobacco. Polished tooth surfaces make it more difficult for plaque and debris to accumulate.

### **How to get the most from your home care routine.**

You can help improve your oral hygiene by making plaque and calculus (tartar) control part of your daily routine.

**Proper brushing** helps remove plaque from the outer, inner, and chewing surfaces of your teeth. An accepted method for proper brushing is shown below. Your dentist or hygienist may suggest another.

**Flossing** thoroughly helps remove plaque and debris from between the teeth, especially in hard-to-reach areas at and slightly under the gumline. A suggested flossing technique is shown below.

**Between office visits, use a fluoride toothpaste that protects against cavities and reduces tartar formation.**

There's help for you ...Crest® Tartar Protection. Crest® Tartar Protection helps reduce the formation of calculus (tartar) above the gumline between professional cleanings. Crest® Tartar Protection is clinically proven safe for dental enamel and gums. It provides the same cavity-fighting benefit as the other members of the Crest® family, and is accepted by the American Dental Association as an effective decay-preventive dentifrice.

**For Better Results, Brush and Floss Properly**

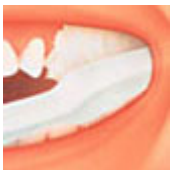


**How to brush:**

1. For thorough but gentle cleaning, use a soft toothbrush.



2. Hold your brush at a 45° angle. Begin by brushing the outside of the front teeth. Use gentle, half-tooth wide, back and forth strokes.



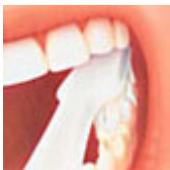
3. Next, brush the outside back teeth, starting along the gumline.



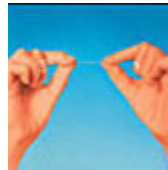
4. Inside back teeth. Use short, angled brush strokes.



5. Inside front teeth. Tilt the brush vertically, use an up-and-down motion.



6. Chewing surfaces. Hold the brush flat. Use a gentle motion.

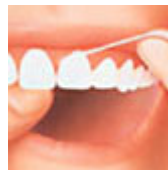


**How to floss:**

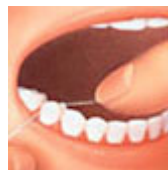
1. Wind 18" of floss around your two middle fingers.



2. Gently guide the floss between teeth.



3. To remove plaque and debris, gently move the floss up and down against the tooth.\*



4. As you move from tooth to tooth, use a fresh section of floss each time.

\* Or use another interdental cleaning device.

*Be sure to follow the special home care instructions provided by your dental professional.*

***They Feel Their Best with You and Crest.***