

## 5 Simple Steps To A Better Smile



### **1. Take a little extra time to give your teeth the care they deserve.**

Did you know that it takes two to three minutes to adequately brush your teeth but that most people spend less than 30 seconds brushing? Why is brushing this long so important? It all has to do with bacteria. Millions of bacteria live, work, and play in our mouths. They feed on food left on our teeth after we eat. Acid is a by-product of this bacterial feasting. It is this acid which destroys enamel, creating cavities. Brushing removes bacteria from our teeth so they can no longer make acid. It is important, however, to remove bacteria from **all** tooth surfaces. This takes two to three minutes.

### **2. Do a little flossing. It just might save your teeth.**

O.K. so you've heard that you need to floss at least once a day. But has anyone ever told you why? You see it all has to do with bacteria again. These crafty critters like to hide between teeth to escape the wrath of the toothbrush. Here they continue to feed on food spewing out cavity causing acid. Worst yet - if allowed to remain for a long time, these bacteria invade and destroy gum tissue as well as the bones and ligaments which support teeth. Flossing removes these bacteria from between teeth so they can no longer cause problems.

### **3. It's not just the candy that is dangerous to your smile.**

Did you know that many foods other than candy promote tooth decay? Bacteria feed on the sugar of candy creating cavity causing acid. Bacteria, however, not only use candy to create acid but can also use any food which contains sugars and other carbohydrates. This includes fruits, peanut butter, crackers, potato chips, popcorn, and other foods. Especially harmful can be foods like raisins and peanut butter that stick to teeth where they provide a constant source of energy for bacteria.

What can you do to protect yourself? Well brushing after meals helps by removing both the bacteria and the leftover food particles which the bacteria feast on. If you cannot brush, try washing food down with liquids ensuring that less food remains on teeth. Chewing sugarless gum also helps because this stimulates saliva flow. Saliva acts as a natural plaque fighting substance.

#### **4. Stop brushing so hard.**

Incredibly, nearly two out of three people damage their own teeth by brushing too hard! It takes very little pressure to remove bacteria, food, and plaque. Unfortunately, most people apply three to four times the necessary brushing pressure causing damage to teeth and gums. This damage includes: receding gums, sensitive teeth, notched teeth, and root cavities.

#### **5. Reduce your dependency on coffee.**

Believe it or not, coffee is one of the most dangerous threats to your smile. Coffee stains teeth destroying your naturally white smile. Worst yet, because most people sip coffee throughout the day, bacteria are provided with a constant source of sugar from which to produce cavity causing acid. If that wasn't bad enough, coffee can cause small fractures in teeth called crazes. These occur when the teeth are forced to expand and contract as a result of being exposed to hot foods or liquids. These hot and cold cycles occur when we drink hot coffee. Over a prolonged period of time, this will create crazes in the teeth.

## **Healthy Tips**



Depending on your age, level of conditioning, and your fitness goals, you should train in a particular heart-rate zone. Beginners should try to elevate their heart rate to 50%-60% of their maximum while intermediates and advanced should shoot for 70%-85% of their max. The higher your heart rate, the more calories you will burn and the more fit you can become. To figure your maximum heart rate, simply subtract your age from 220. For example, if you're 30 years old, you would have a maximum heart rate of 190. To work at 70% of your maximum heart rate, you would shoot for a heart rate of approximately 133 beats per minute ( $0.7 \times 190$ ). You can also count bpm (beats per minute) in 10-second increments and then multiply by six.