



## February is Dental Awareness Month

Children in the US miss **51 million school hours** a year due to dental-related illnesses

- Maintaining good oral health and preventing cavities is important.
- Eating a healthy diet, brushing and flossing twice a day is the best defense against dental-related illnesses.

### Dental Facts

- Our ancestors' diet included uncooked plant food and meat. This diet made an extra set of molars quite useful. Those extra molars are what we now commonly refer to as 'wisdom teeth'. However, as our diets and ways of preparing food have evolved, our jaws have become smaller, often leaving insufficient space for these third molars. That's why many people today need to have their wisdom teeth removed to prevent dental complications.
- Molars come out about every 6 years. The 1st molar is at 6 years old, 2nd molar is at 12 years old and wisdom teeth approximately at 18 years old.
- There are over 700 different types of bacteria in a healthy mouth.
  - The average person has around 20 billion bacteria in their mouth at any given time. However, this number can fluctuate based on factors like diet, genetics, and oral hygiene practices, with some estimates reaching as high as 100 billion bacteria, if not brushing regularly.
- You should replace your toothbrush after being sick because you can end up re-infecting yourself.

### When to use mouthwash?

- Some experts recommend using mouthwash before or after brushing based on personal preference.
- Others recommend avoiding mouthwash right after brushing, since this may wash away the fluoride from your toothpaste. Instead, use mouthwash a different time during the day or at least 30 minutes after brushing.

### Should you brush your teeth right after eating?

- Most experts agree that you should brush your teeth after every meal when possible.
- If you've eaten something acidic like citrus fruits or soda, you should wait at least 30 minutes before brushing to allow your saliva to neutralize the acid on your teeth.
  - This may be a good time for mouthwash when available

Brushing chart provided by Colgate can be found here: [Colgate brushing chart](#)

If you have any questions, please contact:

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