

## WORD OF MOUTH

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### Do As I Say?

Recently someone asked me what I do to clean my teeth. It's a question few people have asked over the last 20 years, I'm not sure why. It brings up a lot of other good questions.

Do I need a fluoride toothpaste, am I brushing correctly, do I need an antibacterial rinse, toothpaste, electric brush? The answers all vary by individual, and sometimes even by age or other medical factors. Only a dentist familiar with your individual situation can tell you what might be best for you right now. There is sometimes disagreement among dentists, and you have to do what works best for you.

First of all, you need to floss. Most people are in denial, but it is one of the undeniable facts of life (though some people may have healthy gums despite not flossing). More than one study has linked flossing with longevity and a cardiovascular health.

Second, you need to brush well with an appropriate toothbrush. There are so many considerations here, you should ask your dentist or hygienist which is best for you.

Most people are surprised when I tell them I only use hydrogen peroxide for brushing. I might go into more detail in another article, but I like it. Studies show it does not matter what you use to remove the plaque (cola or latte might not be good). If you have a problem with decay, you may need fluoride. Most important is how well you brush.

Antibacterial rinse? There are over 20 types of normal (sometimes beneficial) bacteria in your mouth. Balance is the key. If you do not have any periodontal issues, do you want to disrupt that balance? Ask your dentist, or visit our website for more information.

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