

Belledental Home Care Routine:

How to save your teeth (and money at the same time)



I'm sure if you've ever visited a dentist, you've been asked to floss and brush your teeth - sounds like good advice - yet I've seen lots of people go wrong even with good advice.

Let's examine that... floss and brush your teeth. Almost like you were born knowing what to do... just that you've been lazy!

There is a very specific way to do these things - like all actions - there can be a right and wrong way. The wrong way can actually DAMAGE your teeth and the right way can lead to comfortable, great looking pearly white teeth and healthy pink gums.

Lets get the basics right.

It's really important to get a through professional clean BEFORE you embark on this program

the correct order:

- 1) flossing (or some other form of cleaning between teeth)
- 2) tooth brushing (with the correct toothbrush - see below)
- 3) use a mouthrinse ... LAST

Flossing:

I suspect that lots of people are turned off flossing for a number of reasons. Their gums bleed, the floss shreds on the edges of their fillings, their gums are sore.

All valid reasons not to floss.

Just like many things we should do and we don't do... the consequences are - well, they're not really that bad.

That is... until they really do get bad. We're not programmed to take note of problems that are slowly progressing, non-painful and don't really cause us any social embarrassment. Has anyone ever died of bad breath - NOT EVEN ON THE RECIEVING END!

Seriously - flossing can save teeth, keep your gums healthy - both of which are the key elements to a beautiful smile - coupled with a sweet breath... it's what good dentistry is all about!

The next 2 pages are the actual routine we recommend...

Belledental Flossing Home Care Routine

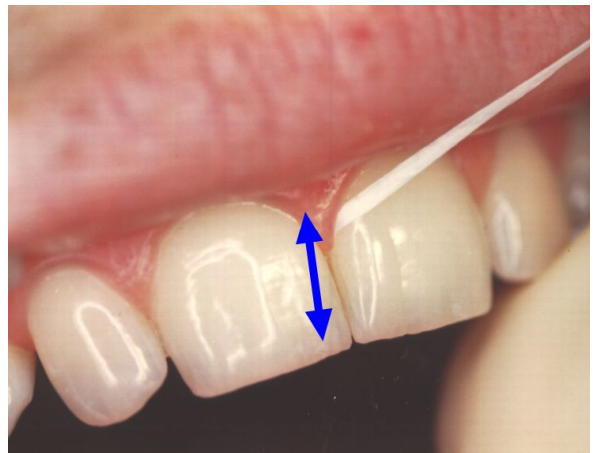
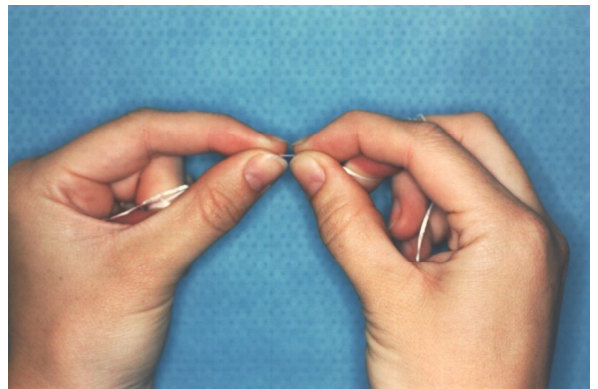


Flossing is the most thorough and effective way to clean between your teeth. The areas between your teeth account for almost 40% of the tooth surfaces you need to keep clean if you wish to have healthy teeth and gums. Following these flossing instructions regularly as part of the **Belledental** home care routine will ensure your teeth and gums stay healthy and your dentistry lasts longer.

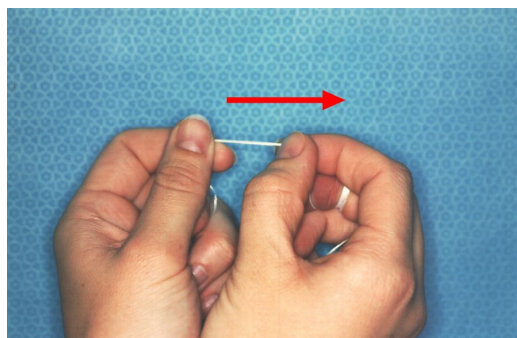
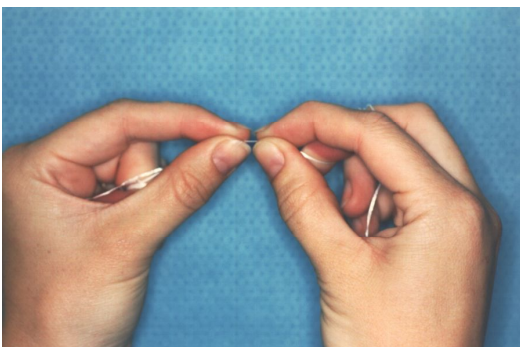
Please follow the photos that correspond to each point on the supplied page.

1. Tear off approximately 50cm of floss. Wind the floss around your middle fingers so that your index fingers and thumbs are free to guide and control the floss.
2. The idea with flossing is to ease the floss between your teeth with a gentle sawing motion until it passes through the contact area between your teeth. Once it is through the contact area, hold the floss against the tooth that is closer to the front of your mouth, and then using the floss, wipe that surface of the tooth (up and down). You will notice when the floss reaches gum level, it will pass down between the tooth and gums. Ensure that the floss does pass down into this area – firmly but gently. You may notice when you first start, there will be some bleeding.
Bleeding means floss MORE.
3. Once you have done the surface of the tooth closer to the front of your mouth, guide the floss back against the tooth behind, and holding the floss against this tooth, wipe this surface of the tooth with the floss in the same manner.

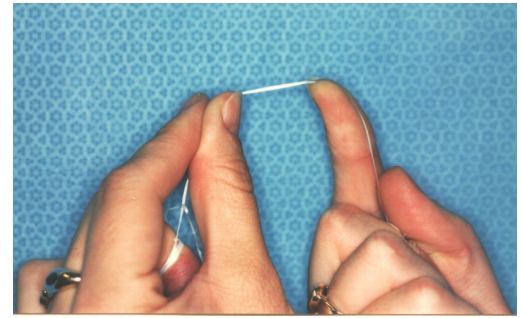
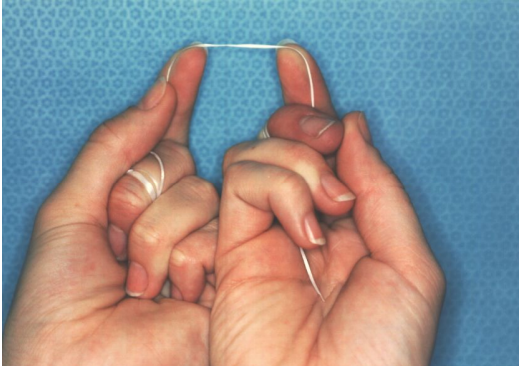
Ease the floss out from between the teeth, and wipe the plaque off the floss with your thumb and index finger (there is no need to move to a new length of floss – just continue to wipe until the floss becomes frayed – then move to a new length of floss). Ease the floss through the next space between your teeth and repeat the process.



Wipe the floss between thumb and index finger

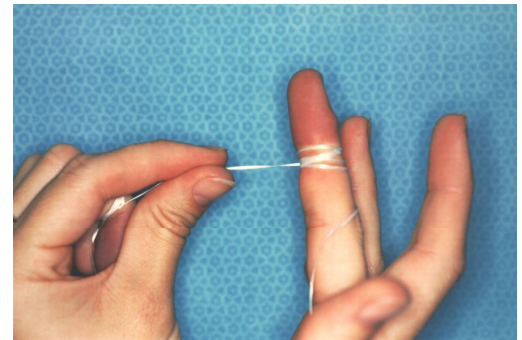


4. The grip I've found that works best on your front teeth is this... guiding the floss using your thumb and index fingers – hands together.



5. The grip I've found best for upper back teeth and all your lower teeth is this... guiding the floss with both index fingers – hands together.

6. If at any stage you require more reach, just let one loop off your middle finger to allow for the full reach of your index fingers. If you don't require so much reach, just wind a loop back onto your middle finger.
7. If at any stage the floss becomes frayed, just let one loop of floss off one middle finger and wind one loop of floss onto the other middle finger – you have moved along the floss.
8. If the floss catches on any of your fillings or restorations – it is an indication that the restoration requires replacement or modification so that this doesn't happen. The floss should slip relatively smoothly from the surface of the filling onto the tooth. If it catches and gets caught, unwind the floss from one hand and pull it through. Make a note of this area so that you can mention it at your next visit.



Always combine your flossing with a toothbrushing. Floss first then brush. The foaming action of the toothpaste will remove any plaque that you've loosened but haven't removed.

Initially, mouthrinsing in combination with your flossing and brushing can help improve the health of your gums quicker. Use the mouthrinse with a swishing action between your teeth AFTER you floss and brush. **Belledental** recommends a mouthrinse when you first start flossing - to help get your gums healthy.

The **Belledental** home care routine is:

1. Flossing
2. Toothbrushing
3. Mouthrinsing

If you have problems flossing, using this technique, ask about our range of flossing aids – the principle is the same, but you don't have to use your fingers to guide the floss.

If you're still having problems – contact the surgery for help.

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This flossing instruction is only a guide – it is not a replacement for instruction or coaching by your dentist or dental professional and it is not a replacement for regular visits and professional care by your dentist.



or



The most important things to get right with toothbrushing are -

1) **Get an ultra-soft brush.** Yes... that's right. An Ultra soft brush. They are available at your supermarket - here is an example I dug up at my local supermarket.



Look for the
ULTRA SOFT label

I often get asked about electric toothbrushes - yep they're great - but I would only use them to clean grease off car parts in the garage. Their action, in my opinion is way too harsh and it is too easy to go overboard with them. Save your money and be gentle on your teeth and gums - better still, be ultra gentle. Plaque is easy to remove, the challenge is to be THOROUGH.

A lot of people at this point tell me how an ultra soft brush (or even just a soft brush) just doesn't make their teeth feel clean. There are 2 possible solutions to this: 1) get a really thorough professional clean - regularly and before embarking on this routine and 2) yep ... you might need a **SLIGHTLY** more aggressive toothpaste. That's why I recommend the pearl drops brand in the photo (previous page). Getting your teeth really clean and healthy is just like polishing an antique car - really soft rag (in your teeth's case really soft brush) and a paste that has a **very tiny bit of buff** in it. That's the secret - in combination with the next point.

2) **Be extremely gentle** with your brushing action -either jiggle the brush or move the brush in small circles aiming the bristles of the brush - GENTLY - into the margin between your tooth and gums. Hold the brush between your thumb and 2 fingers - there is no need to hold the brush like a baseball bat! **The area where your tooth and gums meet** - this is the most critical part to keep clean - all gum disease and a lot of decay happens where the gums form a cuff around your teeth.

You need to brush both the gums and the teeth!

People often say to me - 'I've been brushing first...'. Flossing first will give you a real insight into what goes on between your teeth - plus, flossing may loosen food / plaque - the foaming action of the toothpaste will lift it and remove it.

Mouth rinsing is OPTIONAL!

As I have already mentioned, mouth rinsing is optional. If you're starting out with flossing and your gums are bleeding, floss is catching and your gums are tender - mouth rinsing can be a really good aid to getting everything healthy but they are not everything that the manufacturers tell you!

MOUTH RINSES are NOT a replacement for flossing.

Think about it this way - do you know of a kitchen floor cleaner that you just spray on and walk away? When you come back 1 minute later the floor is clean and sparkling!

NO WAY! to get the kitchen floor clean, you need to scrub the floor with a mop or sponge. It is exactly the same with teeth. Floss first, brush and then, once all the muck has been removed, if you think it's helpful, have a rinse with a mouth rinse. To be most effective, don't rinse with water after using the mouthrinse.

Choice of mouthrinses

The most effective ingredient (according to research literature) for mouth rinses is Chlorhexidine. It is also the most effective at **STAINING TEETH**. Chlorhexidine, if used regularly, deposits a dark brown surface stain on teeth.

There are non-staining formulas available that provide the benefits of chlorhexidine with only a very **slight degree** of staining - for my patients, if they need a mouthrinse, use a non-staining chlorhexidine formulation for a month in combination with flossing and brushing. After a month, either drop the mouth rinse or switch to a commercially available, alcohol free mouth wash available from the supermarket.

Seriously consider whether you need to be using a mouth rinse more than 2-3 times a week.

If you have concerns about anything we've discussed - contact your dentist. If you don't have a regular dentist...get one!