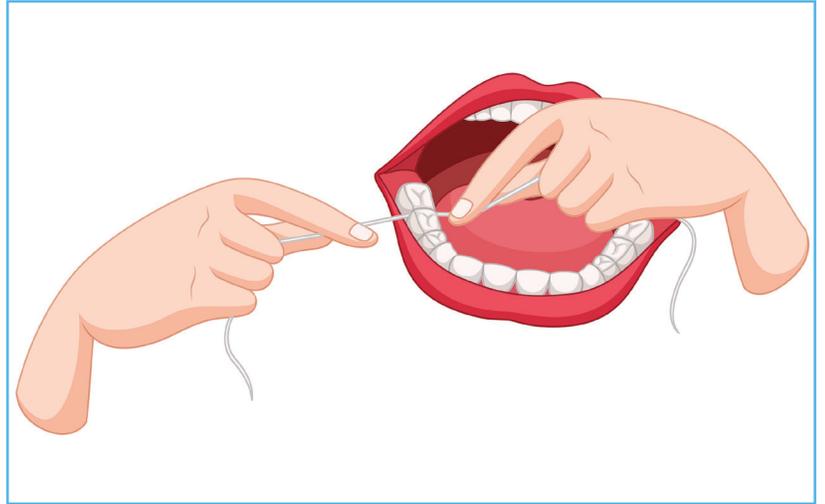


TO FLOSS OR NOT TO FLOSS?

Yes! It helps to attain and maintain your oral health



What causes tooth decay?

Tooth decay happens when the bacteria in plaque feeds on the sugar in our diet to produce acid that can cause cavities. If food debris or plaque is left undisturbed for even a few hours, the tooth decay process will begin. Beneath the hard, outer enamel surface is where the breakdown of the tooth happens – and you can't see it.

What causes gum disease?

Gum disease affects the gums and supporting structures of your teeth and is the leading cause of tooth loss in adults. Plaque accumulates on your teeth but can be controlled by proper brushing and flossing. If not removed regularly, plaque can harden into tartar or calculus. The tartar coats and sticks to teeth and roots, allowing more plaque and bacteria to adhere to the teeth. If not treated, it can cause irreversible damage to the gums and bone surrounding the teeth.

Where do tooth decay and gum disease occur?

Tooth decay and gum disease occurs anywhere food debris and plaque accumulate. The ideal spot is between teeth since it is difficult for toothbrush bristles to remove any of the debris. That is why flossing or other interdental cleaners are the best ways to remove plaque and food debris.

What evidence is there to prove that flossing works?

Dentists see lower rates of tooth decay and healthier gum tissue in patients who use floss or other methods to remove food debris and plaque between teeth.

Have there been well-conducted clinical trials to validate this?

Clinical trials to prove the efficacy of flossing are very difficult, lengthy and expensive to conduct. Trials comparing patients who floss

to those who don't run the risk of exposing the control group to situations where they would get tooth decay and gum disease.

We know from lab studies how tooth decay is created and how to prevent it. We only need to look at how effective each method is in removing plaque and food debris.

What do we recommend: brushing and cleaning between your teeth

We will continue to recommend brushing your teeth twice a day (first thing in the morning, last thing at night) with fluoridated toothpaste for at least two minutes at a time. Remove food debris and plaque between teeth with floss, a dental pick, pre-threaded flosser, tiny brushes that reach between the teeth, water flosser or wooden plaque remover.

Talk to your dentist about what types of dental care products will be most effective for you.