

FOCUS

ON DENTAL HYGIENE

HEALTHY SMILES: START CLEANING IN BETWEEN

We all brush our teeth, but very few of us clean between our teeth. If you don't like to floss, you're not alone. Statistics show that only about 12 percent of us floss daily. If you struggle with flossing, there is a high-tech solution: An oral irrigator — a device that flushes away food particles between your teeth with a jet stream of pulsating water. It's great for those who want fresh breath and clean mouths. In other words, the whole family!

Top 5 reasons you should open wide and use an oral irrigator every day

1. You'll love your magnetic smile.

The benefits of irrigating are indisputable, so why not choose the best device? Studies have shown that adding a magnetic component to an oral irrigator results in less calculus formation than irrigating without "hydromagnetics." This technology ionizes the pulsating solution of water, causing plaque to be far less sticky and calculus deposits to eventually soften. The use of hydromagnetics causes a reduction in bacteria on the root surfaces and prevents them from establishing residency in your mouth.

2. Blast away elusive, threatening plaque.

The spaces between our teeth are the perfect place for plaque accumulation — especially toward the back of our mouths between molars and premolars where it's more difficult to reach with a toothbrush. Bacteria find refuge in these hard-to-reach spots where it can mature and flourish without disruption from brushing. Since we don't have flip-top heads for better access, irrigating is the most effective way to seek out and blast away hidden bacteria.

3. Stimulate healthier gums.

Ignore your gums and you could be inviting serious trouble. An estimated 75

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percent of adults have some degree of gum disease, which may actually raise the risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes. That pulsating stream of water shooting from the irrigator tip is doing more than washing away debris. It is actually massaging your gums, which makes them more robust and healthy.

4. Promote face-to-face fresh breath.

Cosmetic dental work looks fantastic but brings its own challenges. Crowns, bridges and braces often harbor debris that is inaccessible to even the finest toothbrush or floss. This debris causes bad breath and sometimes gingivitis as pockets of bacteria form. Oral irrigators remove this debris and leave your breath fresher while reducing the likelihood of gum disease. Because irrigators reach areas a toothbrush can't, they are ideal for cleaning around crowns, bridgework, implants and braces.

5. It'll make your hygienist — and you — happy.

Let's face it. Nobody likes to sit in a dental chair with their mouth wide open. Daily irrigation is another line of defense against periodontal disease that keeps mouths healthy. Come check-up time, this can cut back the length of time you're stuck in the hygienist's hot seat.

Closing Thoughts

Adding oral irrigation to your dental routine ensures you are optimizing your dental home care plan. The key word here is "routine." Following an office visit and a lecture from your dental professional, chances are you'll floss and irrigate — for a day or two. But most of us soon fall into the same old habits. Make irrigating a routine. You'll love the way it makes your mouth feel.

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