



Dental  
Health Services

Exclusively for Dental Health Services Enrollees

# TOOTH TIPS!

## Why Flossing Matters: A Small Daily Habit with Big Health Benefits

Most people brush their teeth twice a day, but flossing often gets skipped, seen as optional or easy to forget. In reality, flossing is one of the most important daily habits for protecting both your oral health and your overall well-being. Taking just a few minutes each day to floss can help prevent serious dental problems and support better health throughout your body.

### Flossing Reaches Where Brushing Can't

Your toothbrush is great at cleaning the surfaces of your teeth, but it can't reach the tight spaces between them or just below the gumline. These areas are where food particles and plaque, a sticky film of bacteria, tend to build up. When plaque isn't removed, it hardens into tartar, which can only be removed by a dental professional.

Flossing removes plaque and debris from between teeth, helping to prevent cavities, gum irritation, and bad breath.

### Types of Floss: Finding What Works for You

- Nylon (multifilament) floss - A widely used option that comes waxed or unwaxed. Waxed floss slides more easily between tight teeth, while unwaxed floss may better grip plaque.
- PTFE (monofilament) floss - Often labeled as "glide" floss, this type is shred-resistant and slides smoothly between teeth, making it a good choice for very tight spaces.
- Dental tape - Broader and flatter than traditional floss, dental tape can be more comfortable for people with wider spaces between their teeth.
- Floss picks - Pre-threaded plastic picks are convenient and portable, making them helpful for people who struggle with traditional floss or flossing on the go.
- Water flossers - These devices use a stream of water to clean between teeth and along the gumline. They can be especially helpful for people with braces, bridges, implants, or limited dexterity.

It's important to note that there is no "best" floss but your dentist or hygienist can help recommend the best option based on your teeth, gums, and personal needs.

### The Bottom Line

Flossing is a simple daily habit with powerful benefits. By cleaning the spaces your toothbrush can't reach, flossing helps prevent cavities, protects your gums, supports fresh breath, and contributes to better overall health. The best floss is the one you'll use every day, and a few minutes daily can make a lasting difference for your smile and beyond.



Flossing daily is critical to maintaining good oral health.

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A Great Reason to Smile<sup>sm</sup>