

# Treatment and Prevention Advice

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## Oral Hygiene

- Gum disease is caused by bacteria in plaque. It is important to maintain excellent oral hygiene habits in order to reduce your risk of developing tooth decay and gum disease.
- Ensure that you brush your teeth two times per day, including once at night.
- Use of an electric toothbrush can make this process easier
- Try to angle the bristles of your brush towards your gum line, this will help to remove bacteria from the gum margin
- You must clean in between the teeth using interdental brushes or floss daily
- Use fluoridated toothpaste
- After brushing your teeth you may spit, but don't rinse. This will allow maximum protection of your teeth.

## Diet advice:

- Sugars are a major cause of tooth decay therefore it is important to be aware of what you are consuming
- Try to limit the number of times sugary food/drink is consumed- frequency is more important than quantity
- Try to incorporate lots of vegetables in your diet
- Switching to sugar free/diet drinks is a good way of avoiding too much sugar in your drink
- Do not consume anything sweet at least 2 hours before bedtime.
- Keep a diet diary for 3 days in which you jot down everything you have had to eat and drink, you may then discuss this with your dentist.

## Smoking and Alcohol intake:

- One of the many dangers of smoking is that it significantly increases the risk of mouth cancer
- It is also one of the most significant risk factors associated with gum disease and it can lower the chances for successful treatment
- Speak to your dentist, GP or pharmacist about smoking cessation
- You should not drink more than 14 units of alcohol for women and 21 units of alcohol for men.
- In combination, smoking and drinking alcohol, greatly increases the risk of mouth cancer

