

Dental Bites Newsletter



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Go Green: Complete your medical history online!

We need your help! In order to implement our chartless electronic health history records, our patients need to visit our website and click the link to complete the "New Patient On-Line Forms". If you are viewing this newsletter online, click the icon below to be taken directly to our website, then click "New Patients", next select "View Online Forms."

If you do not have access to the online forms via the internet and require an alternative method, it is important to contact our facility in order to make arrangements.

Waxahachie Family Dentistry strives to provide the latest technology available. Not only is this beneficial to our patients, but to our environment. Our office is an Eco-Dentistry



Association Member. Green dentistry is a new approach to tooth care that reduces the environmental impact of dentistry. In addition to reducing our patient's exposure to radiation by up to 90%, using a steam based, surgical-grade instrument sterilization, and a special water filtration system—our office is reducing the use of paper by keeping records electronically.

Our office has also reduced the amount of postcards we mail by using our electronic reminder system. The reminders are e-mailed and/or text messaged to your cell phone according to your notification preferences. If you are not currently enrolled in this system, please contact our staff for more information.

Your participation allows our office to fulfill our commitment to produce less waste and to have a more eco-friendly environment. We believe it is our job to be environmental stewards. Thank you.

Which came first? Brush or Paste?

Tooth-brushing tools date back to 3500-3000 BC when the Babylonians and the Egyptians made a brush by fraying the end of a twig. Tombs of the ancient Egyptians have been found containing tooth-sticks alongside their owners. Around 1600BC, the Chinese developed "chewing sticks" which were made from aromatic tree twigs to freshen breath. The Chinese are believed to have invented the first natural bristle toothbrush made from the bristles from pigs' necks in the 15th century, with the bristles attached to a bone or bamboo handle.

The first modern-designed toothbrush was made by William Addis in England around 1780 – the handle was carved from cattle bone and the brush portion was made from swine bristles. In 1844, the first 3-row bristle brush was designed. When Du Pont invented nylon, it was used to make toothbrush bristles. The first electric toothbrush was made in 1939, but didn't appear in the United States until 1960.

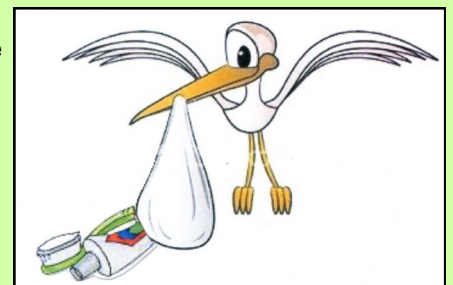
Today, both manual and electric toothbrushes come in many shapes and sizes and are typically made of plastic molded handles and nylon bristles. The most recent toothbrush models include handles that are straight, angled, curved, and contoured with grips and soft rubber areas to make them easier to hold and use. The basic fundamentals have not changed since the times of the Egyptians and Babylonians – a handle to grip, and a bristle-like feature with which to clean the teeth. Over its long history, the toothbrush has evolved to become a scientifically designed tool using modern ergonomic designs and safe and hygienic materials that benefit us all.

Egyptians are believed to have started using a paste to clean their teeth around 5000BC, before toothbrushes were invented. Ancient Greeks and Romans are known to have used toothpastes, and people in China and India first used toothpaste around 500BC. Ancient toothpastes were used to treat some of the same concerns that we have today – keeping teeth and gums clean, whitening teeth and freshening breath.

The ingredients of ancient toothpastes were however very different and varied. Ingredients included a powder of ox hooves, ashes and burnt eggshells that was combined with pumice. The Greeks and Romans favored more abrasiveness and their toothpaste ingredients included crushed bones and oyster shells. The Romans added more flavoring to help with bad breath, as well as powdered charcoal and bark. The Chinese used a wide variety of substances in toothpastes over time that have included ginseng, herbal mints and salt.

The development of toothpastes in more modern times started in the 1800s. Early versions contained soap and chalk—the encyclopedia described home-made toothpaste that used ground charcoal in the 1830's. Prior to the 1850s, 'toothpastes' were usually powders. Around 1850, a new toothpaste in a jar was developed.

In the second half of the twentieth century modern toothpastes were developed to help prevent or treat specific diseases and conditions such as tooth sensitivity. Fluoride toothpastes to help prevent decay were introduced in 1914. Toothpastes with very low abrasiveness were also developed and helped prevent the problems caused by overzealous brushing. Toothpastes today typically contain fluoride, coloring, flavoring, sweetener, as well as ingredients that make the toothpaste a smooth paste, foam and stay moist. Toothpaste in tubes is used throughout the world.



Do you experience Dry Mouth?

Medications can have oral side effects — dry mouth being the most common. Be sure to tell your dentist about any medications that you're taking, even medicines that you purchase without a prescription.

These are the types of medications that will often produce dry mouth:

- Antihistamines
- Decongestants
- Pain Killers
- Diuretics
- High Blood Pressure Medications
- Antidepressants



Other medications may cause abnormal bleeding when brushing or flossing, inflamed or ulcerated tissues, mouth burning, numbness or tingling, movement disorders and taste alteration. If you experience any of these symptoms, contact our office.

Your medication could be to blame....

5 Habits to Plaque Buildup

Plaque is a sticky mix of bacteria and the substances they secrete. The bacteria then live in this film on teeth. At first, this slimy layer is fragile and easily removed by tooth brushing. The bacteria in tooth plaque are free to release acids that damage tooth enamel. If left alone, plaque buildup also gradually hardens, creating tartar or calculus on your teeth. Tartar is petrified plaque. Once tartar builds up, a professional dental cleaning is needed because tartar cannot be brushed away.

Plaque Habit No. 1: Not Brushing Regularly. No one else might notice if you don't brush your teeth twice a day, every day. But your teeth will. Brush your teeth gently twice a day, using fluoride-containing toothpaste. Concentrate to make sure you're softly brushing all the surfaces of your teeth.

Plaque Habit No. 2: Not Flossing Daily. Brushing doesn't reach the spaces between teeth, but plaque does. A simple daily flossing between teeth clears away plaque before it can cause damage. Flossing also cleans plaque at the gum line, another area that brushing doesn't reach. If left alone, plaque past the gum line can lead to periodontal disease.

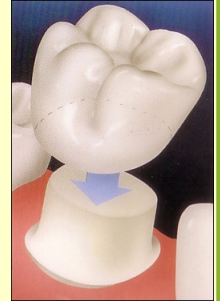
Plaque Habit No. 3: Avoiding the Dentist. Even if you brush and floss your teeth daily, you'll miss some plaque. Over time, that plaque hardens into tartar that needs to be removed at your dentist's office. Yet more than a third of people surveyed haven't seen their dentist in more than a year.

Plaque Habit No. 4: Neglecting Nature's Toothbrushes. Long before toothbrushes and fluoride toothpaste existed, certain foods played a role in keeping plaque off our teeth. Eat crunchy vegetables or fruits with the skin on can scrub off plaque. Carrots, apples, cucumbers, and many other raw fruits and vegetables are teeth-friendly, despite the sugar they contain.

Plaque Habit No. 5: Indulging Your Sweet Tooth. Bacteria love simple carbohydrates like sugar. Eating candy or drinking sugary soft drinks lets sugar stick to our teeth, giving bacteria something to munch on. As the bacteria create a film of plaque, they digest sugar into acid, which damages teeth.

Don't Panic: Follow these steps if your crown comes off

Crowns, which slip over and cover damaged teeth, sometimes loosen and fall out. This is rarely an emergency, but it can be painful because the exposed tooth tissue is often sensitive to pressure, air or hot and cold temperatures. In some cases, a crown may come loose because decay has developed underneath it. The decay can cause the tooth to change shape and as a result, the crown may no longer fit properly.



You may be eating, or biting on something when you discover that a crown has become loose or fallen out. Be careful not to swallow or damage the crown.

Put the crown in a safe place and make an appointment to see our office as soon as possible. You don't want to wait too long because the tooth will be weak and could be damaged more if it is not protected by the crown. Also, when a crown is missing for a long time, your teeth may move. If this happens your crown may no longer fit.

If the tooth is structurally sound and the crown still fits properly, Dr. Clinton or Dr. Haney will clean the area and then replace the crown.

If the tooth has been affected by decay, the doctor will need to prepare the tooth again by removing the decay and then making a new crown to replace the old one.



"It's true! Our clothes, the curtains, the carpeting in the waiting room . . . they're all made out of recycled dental floss!"