

September is Oral Health Month

and EVERYBODY
DESERVES a
**GREAT
SMILE**



Follow these **5 steps** to be an oral hygiene champion....

Step 1

Brush twice daily

It is important to brush our teeth at least twice daily. First thing in the morning and also at bedtime. Brushing before bedtime gets rid of plaque and germs build up during the day.

How we brush our teeth is equally important to remove plaque. Plaque that is not removed correctly can harden and form tartar and can cause gum disease.

Brush your teeth correctly

1. Align the toothbrush at a 45-degree angle to your gum line.
2. Move the toothbrush back and forth around your teeth.
3. Brush circularly or vertically around the outer, inner, and chewing surfaces of your teeth.
4. Brush your tongue to remove bacteria and prevent bad breath.
5. Finish by rinsing your mouth thoroughly.





Step 2

Remember to floss

Flossing is just as important as brushing, as it stimulates the gums, reduces plaque, and helps lower inflammation in the area.

1. Take about 45 cm of dental floss and wrap most of it around your left middle finger. Wind the remaining floss around your right middle finger.
2. Grip the floss between your thumbs and index fingers and gently slide it through the contact point of the teeth. Slide it up and down the side of the teeth, down each side of the pink triangle of gum between the teeth. The floss should disappear slightly under the gum (this cleans the tooth under the collar).
3. Gently remove the floss from the teeth. Wind a little bit of the floss from your left finger to your right finger to move along the dirty part and to give you a fresh area of floss to clean the next two teeth with. Repeat this wherever two teeth are touching.



Step 3

Drink plenty of water

Water is important for your overall health – drinking water after every meal can help to minimise the harmful effects of acidic foodstuff on the teeth.



Step 4

Make the right food choices

The foods you choose and how often you eat them can affect your general health and the health of your teeth and gums.

Eating too many sugar foods puts you at risk for tooth decay (cavities). Ultimately, tooth decay happens when plaque comes into contact with sugars in the mouth.

Bacteria in the plaque convert sugars into acid in the mouth which can then erode the enamel of your teeth. These acids are what lead to cavities.

Acidic fruits, teas, and coffee can also wear down tooth enamel. While you don't necessarily have to avoid such foods altogether, it's important to stay mindful. Eating fresh, crunchy produce not only contains more healthy fibre, but it's also the best choice for your teeth.

Some healthy food options for your teeth include:

- Whole grains
- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Low-fat and fat-free dairy foods.
- Lean sources of protein such as lean beef, skinless poultry, and fish; dry beans, peas, and other legumes.



Step 5

Visit your dentist regularly

Remember to visit your dentist for check-ups. Having regular check-ups is important, as your dentist can spot potential problems and offer treatment solutions and advice.

Encourage your children to brush their teeth by using our fun brushing charts.



Where to find us:

- Platinum Health Medical Centre (PHMC), Corner of Beyers Naudé Avenue and Heystek Street, Rustenburg - Telephone: 014 590 1700 or 080 000 6942
- Union Hospital, Hospital Street, Swartklip – Telephone: 010 133 1709
- Amandelbult Hospital, 1 Hospital Street, Tumela Mine, Chromite – Telephone: 087 463 0415
- Setaria Clinic, 33 Merensky Street, Farm Zondereinde, Setaria Village – Telephone: 014 784 3214
- Thabazimbi Medical Centre, 9 Watsonia Street, Thabazimbi – Telephone: 014 133 0106
- Burgersfort Medical Centre, Shop no UG04, Tubatse Crossing Mall, Burgersfort – Telephone: 087 463 0406
- Jane Furse Clinic, Shop 12, JPI Business Centre, Stand no 2008, Vergelegen C Section, Jane Furse Village, Sekwati – Telephone: 087 463 0851

Did you know?

- Poor oral hygiene is linked to other disease like cardiovascular disease, respiratory infections, low birth weight in babies, and other serious health conditions.
- More than 90% of systemic diseases may have oral symptoms.
- Bacteria can enter your bloodstream via your mouth.
- Saliva is one of the body's protectors against bacteria and protects the teeth and gums.
- Foods that are eaten as part of a meal cause less harm to teeth than eating lots of snacks throughout the day, because more saliva is released during a meal. If you do snack, make sure that you snack on something healthy.