Flynns Dental Care Guide to Inter-Dental Cleaning

You can clean between your teeth with dental floss, dental tape or interdental brushes.

Cleaning between your teeth is an essential part of the tooth-cleaning process because it removes plaque from between your teeth and under the gum line, where gum disease often begins.

You should clean between your teeth once a day.

Start by flossing your upper teeth first, from left to right, and then do the same with your lower teeth.

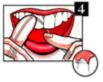You may find it helpful to look in the mirror while you are flossing.

1. Break off 18 inches of floss. Wind each end around your middle finger in each hand. Hold the floss between your thumb and index finger, leaving 1-2 inches in-between.

2. Keep the floss taut between your fingers. Use your thumbs to guide the floss between your upper teeth. Use your index fingers to guide the floss between your lower teeth.

3. Slide the floss gently down between your teeth to the gum using a zigzag motion. Hold the floss taut against the side of one tooth. Slide the floss up the tooth away from the gum.

4. Repeat this on the other tooth. Once you have cleaned the side of the two teeth, gently pull the floss through the teeth. Never jerk the floss out from the teeth - this can displace crowns and fillings.

Floss each tooth surface thoroughly with a clean section of floss.

Sources: Irish Dental Hygienists Association. British Dental Health Foundation.

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