

Guide to Bright Smiles

Frequently Asked Questions on Oral Hygiene



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QA What will happen if I do not replace my missing back teeth?

The back teeth are essential for chewing and grinding our food. If an upper back tooth is missing, its lower opposing back tooth will slowly erupt into the space of the missing tooth. This will eventually lead to the removal of the opposing lower back tooth. Similarly, vice versa happens if a lower back tooth is missing. Due to this, the patient will start using the opposite of the mouth for chewing food and later, will develop TMJ pain.

QA I had undergone root canal treatment on my tooth about 5 years back. But now there is a small swelling over the gums of the tooth and often I feel a bad taste in my mouth. What should I do?

The symptoms you provided indicate that there could be an infection on the root canal-treated tooth. You must consult your dentist, who will take an X-ray of the tooth. The X-ray will reveal if there is any infection around the root of the tooth. If there is an infection in the tooth, then a re-root canal treatment should be performed. This is a procedure where the endodontist removes the root canal filling from the tooth and places an antibacterial material into the tooth's canals. After 2-3 appointments, the tooth infection will subside, and the root canals will be filled with the root canal filling material.

QA My son met with an accident and his permanent upper front tooth broke and only a small portion of the crown of the tooth is visible above the gumline. What treatment can be done?

First, you should visit your dentist. They will X-ray the tooth to determine if there is any fracture of the tooth's root. If there is no root fracture, your

dentist will treat the tooth with a root canal. After the root canal treatment, your dentist will restore the lost crown structure of the tooth by doing a post and core treatment followed by the placement of the crown over the tooth.

QA What is Pulpectomy treatment?

Pulpectomy is a treatment procedure done on milk teeth in children. This treatment is like the root canal treatment done in adults. This treatment is performed when the milk tooth's deep decay involves tissue, and the tooth has more time before it sheds. The pedodontist will drill the tooth under local anaesthesia and remove the pulp tissues during this procedure. Then, the tooth's root canals will be cleaned and shaped, and root canal filling material will be placed in the tooth's canals, followed by a permanent filling on the tooth's crown. A crown must be placed over the tooth to prevent fracture.

QA Which are the specialist doctors available in rendering dental treatments?

In India, there are nine dental specialists in dentistry. A specialist in oral medicine and radiology diagnoses dental diseases or disorders and takes dental X-rays to help with the diagnosis. Specialists in oral and maxillofacial surgery perform extraction of teeth, surgical removal of teeth, cysts, tumours, surgical correction of jaw bones, and other disorders. Specialists in paediatric dentistry perform all dental treatments on children below 12 years old. Specialists in public health dentistry conduct dental camps for the public and school children, conduct health education programmes, and conduct preventive procedures for dental caries. Specialists in periodontology treat the gums. Specialists in orthodontics perform the correction of malaligned teeth. Specialists in conservative dentistry and endodontics perform

treatments like aesthetic restorations, root canal treatment, teeth bleaching, veneers, etc. Specialists in prosthodontics perform treatments for replacing missing teeth, such as partial dentures, complete dentures, fixed partial dentures, dental implants, prostheses, etc. Specialists in oral and maxillofacial pathology perform biopsies in conditions that are difficult to diagnose and then provide a diagnosis.

QA Why are dental X-rays taken?

Your dentist requires an IOPA X-ray to identify the problem associated with that tooth. The X-ray will provide additional information like fracture of the root, depth of dental decay, infection around the tooth's root, and presence of any cyst or abnormal conditions. For orthodontic reasons, your dentist might require more enormous facial X-rays like OPG and lateral ceph. Now, an advanced X-ray known as CBCT provides three-dimensional details of the teeth and bone.

QA I have been suggested to undergo frenectomy treatment by my dentist for my upper lip? Can you tell me about this treatment?

Frenectomy is a procedure done to remove the tissue that connects the gum to the lip. Sometimes, this thick tissue will cause a spacing between the upper front teeth. In such a situation, your dentist will do a frenectomy. This procedure can be a standard surgical removal procedure under local anaesthesia. The other method is doing the procedure with a soft tissue laser. This procedure has advantages over the standard surgical method as the procedure will be bloodless and faster healing.

QA I have been brushing my teeth harder but despite it my teeth look yellow in colour.

Tooth brushing is a process by which the teeth are made clean. Tooth brushing helps remove the food deposits and plaque over the teeth. Tooth brushing should be done using gentle force only. If excessive force is used, it will damage the teeth enamel (outer layer of the crown), and the dentin (inner layer of the crown) of the tooth will be expelled, which makes the tooth look yellow in colour.

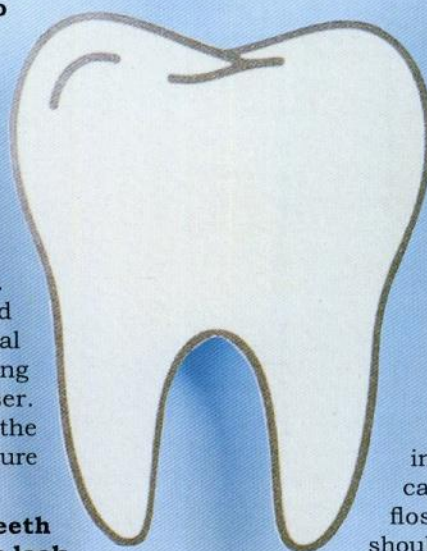
QA Do I need to have extra care of my teeth during pregnancy?

During pregnancy, several hormonal changes occur in the body, which causes pregnancy gingivitis, which causes the gums to become red and swollen. This condition will subside soon after pregnancy. During pregnancy, you should continue toothbrushing twice daily using fluoridated toothpaste. Flossing should be done once a day. You should avoid sweets, carbonated beverages,

smoking, and alcohol consumption during this period. Consume a diet rich in vitamins A and C. If you experience vomiting in the morning, rinse your mouth with water and apply a small amount of fluoride toothpaste. After 30mins, you can brush your teeth. At the time of morning sickness, the enamel softens due to the presence of gastric acid on the teeth.

QA Is tooth brushing enough to get my teeth fully cleaned?

No. Tooth brushing helps remove 65-70% of the food deposits and plaque over the teeth and gums. The rest, 35-40% of the



interdental regions of the teeth, can be cleaned by the dental flossing process only. So, you should floss your teeth at least once a day before brushing your teeth. It is also essential to gently clean the top portion of your tongue with your toothbrush after brushing your teeth. Change your toothbrush once in 3 months.

QA My daughter is 7 years old, and she sleeps with her thumb in her mouth at night. Her upper teeth are forwardly placed. What can be done?

Thumb sucking is a habit commonly seen in young children. This habit is regular if present up to 4 years of age. If the child continues this habit, then it must be stopped. This habit leads to forwardly placed upper front teeth, backwardly placed lower front teeth, increased space between the upper and lower front teeth, malalignment of the back teeth and high arched palate. Malalignment becomes more severe if the habit continues. You should consult a dentist, and treatment should be undertaken to eliminate the habit and correct the malaligned teeth.