

# HOW TO: Flossing

## Overview

- Always wash your hands before flossing as your fingers are in your mouth
- We suggest using dental tape rather than floss. This is a single strand of PTFE (Teflon), which slips between the teeth more easily than the multi-stranded waxed floss that is prone to fraying during use.
- Use a length of about 45cm (18 inches). You need to be able to wrap it around your fingers, and have enough to be able to use clean sections of the floss in different areas.
- Wrap most of the dental floss around either the middle finger or the index finger of one hand, whichever you prefer, and a small amount onto the middle or index finger of the other hand. (Using the middle finger leaves your index finger free to manipulate the floss.) It's important to use only a short length between the fingers of your two hands so that you have more control of the floss (tape)
- Slide between teeth. Gently slide the dental floss between the teeth in a zigzag motion and be careful not to let the floss snap or "pop" between teeth.
- Form a "C". Make a C shape with the dental floss as you wrap it around the tooth. Then carefully pull the floss upward from the gum line to the top of the tooth.
- Roll along. As you move from one tooth to the next, unroll a fresh section of dental floss from the finger of one hand while rolling the used floss onto the finger of the other hand. Use your thumb as a guide. Reach both sides. Don't forget to floss the backside of each tooth.

You should floss your teeth TWICE a day. Brushing alone CAN NOT reach the areas between your teeth and by brushing and flossing regularly you decrease the amount of gum disease and decay occurring between your teeth. You're mouth will feel more healthy and you will reduce the need for complex gum treatments, fillings, root canal treatments, and extractions!

We appreciate that flossing is a difficult skill to master and that some people cannot manage. If this is the case for you please discuss the options with our hygienists who will look at your mouth and suggest alternatives. Cleaning in between your teeth is essential and alternatives to floss are:

- Interdental brushes
- Dental woodsticks
- Floss holders
- Air flosser
- Water jets

- We will advise on what works best in your mouth  
Call now to book an appointment **01952 613311**

