



The Importance of Flossing – Here are the Facts!

A recent article on CBC News contradicts what you have been told about the importance of flossing daily. This post explains why most dental professionals still agree that flossing is a must. For years, you have heard about the importance of flossing. You should do it at least once a day (preferably twice a day). A recent article on CBC News, however, contradicts what you have been told and may be driving you to question the benefits of flossing daily. The article states that there is no strong proof that flossing your teeth offered any medical benefits. This article stems from another article offered by the Associated Press in the United States based on a review published in the 2015 *Journal of Clinical Periodontology*. Both articles say that the effectiveness of flossing (to prevent gum disease) has not been sufficiently researched.

While the CBC News article concludes that studies have failed to demonstrate the effectiveness of flossing, other professional groups have cited their own studies as proof that flossing is indeed beneficial. Regardless of the argument that is currently on, most dental professionals agree: flossing and brushing are a must.

Flossing: Yes or No? The Experts Say, "Yes, Absolutely!"

Media outlets have been contacting the Canadian Dental Association (CDA) and British Columbia Dental Association (BCDA) since the publication. The BCDA has already confirmed in separate interviews and **released a statement** that they support the use of floss and encourage daily flossing. In fact, on BCDA's website, YourDentalHealth.ca, you will find information that emphasizes the importance of flossing including: magnified images of dental floss in action, a printable tip sheet, a video about the importance of flossing and a video showing you how to properly floss.

While the CBC News article states otherwise, dentists in Victoria, BC, as well as the rest of the country, agree that flossing is important. You should floss your teeth once a day, because plaque is not removed with brushing. Once plaque is allowed to harden and calcify, it becomes tartar. Flossing can also help reduce the likelihood you will contract gum disease or cavities.

Here are five reasons to keep up with flossing:

1. Flossing makes brushing more effective. Brushing will remove food particles and some plaque, but it cannot reach in between teeth; where plaque likes to hide. Only flossing can reach into those tight spaces between your teeth

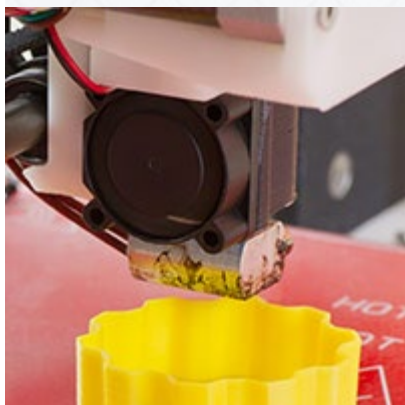
and remove plaque build-up.

2. Flossing protects your gums from plaque and tartar buildup, which can lead to puffy, reddish and inflamed gums (known as gingivitis).
3. Flossing may save you money, especially when you consider the cost of dental treatments and having cavities filled.
4. Flossing has been shown in extensive research to remove unhealthy bacteria from the mouth, which goes beyond discoloured teeth and bad breath. It may help prevent heart diseases, respiratory illness and even diabetes associated with severe forms of gum disease.
5. Flossing will limit how much tartar build-up a hygienist has to remove at your next cleaning; which in turn, means a faster, more comfortable visit.

Visit a Victoria Dental Clinic for Your Check-Up

Now that we have established the importance of flossing, it is important to remember that you still need annual (or preferably bi-annual) **visits to your local dentist**. Brushing and flossing can only do so much; and a professional can help catch early signs of gum disease, cavities, and more.

Schedule your dental checkup or contact Dr. C. Ross Crapo & Associates. Call us at **250-383-3368** today. You can also contact us online with your questions regarding **flossing and oral health**.



Are Antimicrobial Teeth in Our Future?

Bacteria can cause tooth decay and gum disease, so an antimicrobial tooth would be revolutionary in the field of dentistry. In this article, Dr. Crapo discusses the implications of the breakthrough.

Some exciting news was reported last week in the field of dentistry. Scientists have made a breakthrough with an antimicrobial resin. It's 3D printable, and for dentists, this means we might soon have an optional compound for replacing teeth: an antimicrobial tooth compound that could fight off damage and decay-causing bacteria all on its own.

When Will We Start Seeing Antimicrobial Teeth?

The discovery of this compound, while significant, doesn't mean we'll be seeing it at the dentist's office any time soon. The resin fights bacteria by embedding positively charged salt in the resin of the new tooth. The salt reacts with negatively charged bacterial membranes, killing them on contact.

However, when it comes to bacteria and human health, dead bacteria aren't always the best answer. Our digestion relies on bacteria a great deal, and our saliva plays a large part in digesting food before it ever reaches our stomach. A lengthy amount of research will need to be conducted before a technology like this can be widely adopted. Still, the possibilities of such a breakthrough are enough to get you excited.

3D-Printed Teeth Aren't New

One of the most exciting prospects of this new resin is its compatibility with 3D-printing technology. While this seems like a wonderful innovation, you might be surprised to know that this sort of technology is already being used. In fact, our office uses what is known as a CEREC machine to print 3D teeth for our patients. Getting fitted for tooth implants, printing them out, and installing them can all be done on the same day. Patients love the efficiency of our "teeth-in-a-day" concept.

Dental Hygiene Will Never Lose Priority

Although a breakthrough like this will mean less damage done to tooth implants or fillings in the near future, it's important to remember that consistent, basic dental hygiene will keep these problems at bay for the majority. Even if we

decide to use an antimicrobial tooth for new patients, those patients will need to keep up their commitment to hygiene in order to safeguard their teeth.

Brushing, flossing, and a quick rinse with mouthwash will keep us healthier than can any new space-age material that might be discovered in the future. These are exciting times, but even astronauts need to brush their teeth.



The Causes of Sleep Apnea

Did you know that several types of sleep apnea exist and that each type is caused by different factors? This post explains the disorder in detail.

What Is Sleep Apnea?

Sleep apnea is a disorder in which people temporarily stop breathing while they sleep. Breathing pauses can last a few seconds or a few minutes and may occur more than 30 times an hour. Sleep apnea is usually a chronic condition that disturbs people's sleep and affects their day-to-day life. Consequently, poor quality of sleep due to sleep apnea is the leading cause of daytime drowsiness. The disorder often goes undiagnosed, as no blood test can detect it and most people don't realize they have it because they're asleep when it occurs.

What Causes It?

There are three types of sleep apnea: obstructive sleep apnea (OSA), central sleep apnea (CSA), and complex sleep apnea.

Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) is the most common. It is caused by soft tissue in the back of the throat relaxing more than normal. As a person sleeps, the relaxed tissue narrows and blocks the airway. This usually causes loud snoring and might even lower the person's blood-oxygen level. When the brain senses its inability to take in oxygen, it sends a signal to the body to briefly wake up in order to re-open the airway. However, this period is usually so short that most people don't remember it in the morning.

Central sleep apnea (CSA) is less common and doesn't typically involve snoring. It's caused by the central nervous system and occurs when the brain doesn't properly communicate with the muscles that regulate breathing. Affected people might have difficulty getting to sleep or staying asleep due to the problem; however, unlike OSA, people with CSA often remember waking up. Heart failure and stroke often cause this malfunction.

Complex sleep apnea is a mixture of both OSA and CSA. That is, it is caused by a combination of the central nervous system not communicating properly and soft tissue relaxing and blocking one's airway.

Other causes of sleep apnea include aging, being overweight, and having a small neck:

- when people age, the signals sent to their brain change and might limit their ability to maintain firm throat muscles during sleep;
- obesity causes more fat tissue to push against a person's windpipe, which makes it more difficult for the pipe to stay open;
- finally, a bony structure gives rise to a smaller airway, which is also difficult to keep open during sleep.

Sleep apnea requires long-term management. If left untreated, it can increase the risk of heart attacks and heart failure, high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, strokes, and arrhythmia (an irregular heartbeat). It may also cause car accidents and work-related incidents, since its symptoms can cause a person to become drowsy and distracted.

Therefore, if you suspect that you or someone you know has sleep apnea, you should talk to a doctor immediately and get tested. The sooner you are treated, the better.



How to Whiten Teeth and Prevent Discolouration

As a dentist, Dr. Crapo is your go-to expert on tooth whitening. You'll be surprised at some of the tricks he has up his sleeve!

After reading "Why Do I Have Yellow Teeth," you may want to learn some tips and tricks on how to whiten teeth and prevent discolouration. One way to keep your teeth white is to watch what you eat and make healthy decisions. We explained in the previous article how dark-coloured foods and beverages, such as soft drinks, coffee, tea, wine, berries, and sauces, have pigment-producing ingredients that stick to your teeth. Cigarettes are another culprit that can stain your teeth. Kicking some of these bad habits to the curb can improve your health; however, some foods, beverages, and habits that stain teeth are actually good for you! So what should you do if you want to whiten your teeth but don't want to, or can't, kick your bad habits? Better yet, what should you do about healthy foods and beverages that stain your teeth? Reaching for your toothbrush right after you eat or drink something may be your first thought. You might believe that you can brush the stains away before they have time to set in. However, doing so would be a huge mistake! After eating or drinking, your dental enamel becomes softer and remains that way for 30 to 60 minutes. If you brush your teeth during this time, you could weaken your enamel and make things worse. Therefore, if you are going to brush your teeth after you eat, make sure you wait at least an hour.

Another thing you can do is to sip on water after you drink a coloured beverage or eat a meal. You could even swish it around inside your mouth as if it was mouthwash. Having a drink of water can also help you build up saliva, which is your mouth's natural defense against cavities, enamel erosion, and stains.

Ultimately, you might watch what you eat, brush your teeth at the appropriate times, and drink water after eating or drinking things that can stain your teeth; however, you still might be dissatisfied with the colour of your teeth. If this is the case, you can turn to teeth whitening.

Home-whitening kits are one way to whiten your teeth; nevertheless, they aren't that reliable and could potentially

damage your teeth. Professional teeth whitening is safer and more reliable. Consider LED whitening or Zoom whitening, the most requested professional whitening system on the market. It's trusted by dental professionals. Along your path to whiter teeth, just remember that regular brushing, flossing, and dental visits are essential.



Why Do I Have Yellow Teeth?

Did you know that stains are caused by factors inside and outside your teeth? In this blog post, Dr. Crapo shares some insight on a common problem.

We've all been there. Coffee, tea, wine, soft drinks, sports drinks, berries, sauces, and sweets: they all cause stains and give us yellow teeth. Some of us like to say otherwise because we get our teeth professionally cleaned or buy home tooth-whitening kits. If you want to spend a bit more money, you can get porcelain or composite resin veneers, just as celebrities and models often do. Tooth whitening might not be for you, and sometimes it can also be expensive. However, the main question you might want to ask precedes questions about how to whiten teeth. In this article, we explain just why we get yellow teeth in the first place.

There are a number of reasons why you might have yellow teeth, and they all basically stem from two main categories: extrinsic and intrinsic discoloration:

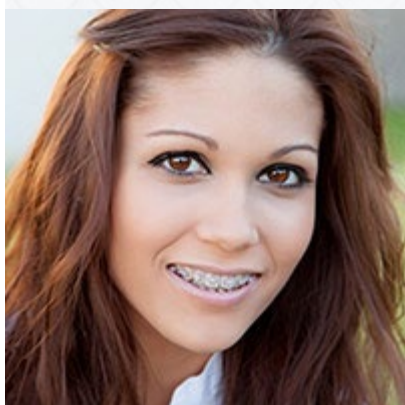
Extrinsic discoloration arises from stains on the outside of your teeth that affect your tooth enamel.

Intrinsic discoloration affects the dentin inside the tooth. Dentin is a layer underneath your tooth enamel that sometimes becomes darker. Thick tooth enamel is naturally white; however, as the enamel wears down as you age or for other reasons, it becomes translucent. Dentin, on the other hand, is naturally yellow. Thus, teeth look yellower as their enamel becomes translucent because their dentin shows through.

We have already covered some of the main dietary habits that stain your teeth. That is, coffee, tea, and other drinks, as well as certain foods, particularly dark-colored foods and beverages. As you may have guessed, many foods and drinks have pigment-producing ingredients that like to stick to tooth enamel. Cigarettes, certain medications, prescription-strength mouthwash, and poor dental hygiene that causes excessive dental plaque are also culprits. Acidic items are even worse, as they can erode tooth enamel and make it easier for pigment-producing ingredients to change the color of our teeth.

Even if you try to prevent discoloration, you might just be born with naturally white or yellow teeth. As stated above, thick

tooth enamel is white. Therefore, if you were born with naturally translucent teeth, then the yellow color of your dentin will naturally shine through. Without expensive dental work, you might not be able to enhance the colour of your teeth and get those pearly whites. If this is the case for you, then you might want to consider porcelain or composite resin veneers.



Straight Teeth, Yellow Teeth, and the Benefits of Smiling

Never underestimate the value of a smile. If you're going to make cosmetic changes to your teeth, make sure it's for the right reasons.

Thinking of changing your smile? Want whiter or straighter teeth? If you change your smile, you might be more confident about your teeth and even smile more. But how can that affect your life?

Did you know that, if you smile when you're sad, you can actually make yourself happier? The opposite can be said for when you frown or make angry faces. Our facial muscles send information to our brains and influence physiological changes. In turn, these changes affect our emotions and can actually elicit emotional responses. The physiological changes associated with smiling can also help you relax.

When you're feeling overwhelmed at work or at a family function, or when you're worried about a critical task that's due soon, just smile. In all fairness, it's easier said than done. It's also exactly the opposite of what you presumably want to do (which is probably to throw something across the floor with an angry face). Nonetheless, science says it will actually help. Smiling can also make others happy; it's contagious, just like a yawn. Seeing someone smiling often causes an onlooker to mimic their smile. As a result, the mimicked smile turns into an authentic smile and causes positive physiological changes, which is why smiling is important. A bright smile can make us feel more outgoing, happy, and help us seem more personable to others. Consequently, a frown or semi-smile can negatively affect our emotions and, in turn, perhaps even our behaviors.

So what if you have yellow teeth or crooked teeth? Will you smile, or will you feel too self-conscious to show your teeth off?

Deciding to whiten or straighten your teeth is a personal decision. The most important factor that you should consider is

how it will affect your life and your mood. Whitening or straightening your teeth isn't going to change the world; however, it could change the way you see or experience it. As stated above, it could even change the way others experience the world while around you. That is, if it makes you smile more.

Whether you decide to whiten your teeth, straighten your teeth, or stick with the teeth you have, just remember, the most important thing to do is smile!

A helpful hint: next time your children or significant other make you sad or mad, just smile, maybe even laugh (preferably not while they are in the same room), and you could start to see the situation in a lighter, brighter, way.

Happy smiling.



Old Wives' Tales at the Dentist's Office

Ever wondered if cavities are really hereditary or if sugar is as bad for your teeth as they say it is? Dr. Crapo debunks several dentistry myths in this post.

Leaving an Aspirin® Next to Your Toothache

Sounds like wise advice at first glance, doesn't it? After all, Aspirin® is a pain killer, so placing it closer to the source of your pain should improve the results of its effects. Unfortunately, Aspirin® doesn't work like that. When you swallow an Aspirin®, the active ingredient is digested and starts inhibiting the communication of pain in your nervous system. If you leave an Aspirin® tablet next to your tooth, it will still be digested; however, instead of bringing you relief, its acidic contents can actually damage your teeth and gums.

Sugar Gives You Cavities

Speaking of damaging your teeth, sugar is supposed to be very damaging for tooth enamel. Well, it is, but not for the reason you might think. The truth is, our teeth are not harmed by sugar itself. When you eat sugar, it's immediately met with saliva and any resident bacteria. The bacteria feed on the sugar and leave behind an acidic waste which is very harmful to tooth enamel. Brushing and flossing your teeth regularly helps to keep the resident bacteria in your mouth to a minimum. The less bacteria there is in your mouth, the less sugar can be turned into acid on your teeth.

Dental Cavities Are Hereditary

Let's clear up one thing: cavities aren't hereditary.

However, when both your parents and your grandparents have a mouthful of cavities, it can be easy to blame genetics. Your genes don't specify how many cavities you'll get, but they can influence the size of your mouth or the positioning

of your teeth. If your genetics dictate closely spaced teeth, you'll have a harder time keeping them clean, which can result in cavities down the road.

Parents are responsible for teaching their children good dental-hygiene habits. Bad habits are hard to break when you're taught them from a young age; maybe that's why the genetic myth has lasted for so long.

Know Any Other Dentistry Myths?

If you can think of another dentistry myth, we can find out if there's any truth behind it. [Send it to us](#), and we'll reply as quickly as we can. You can also ask us right in our office, during your regularly scheduled appointment. Regularly visiting your dentist to prevent unhealthy teeth, however, is one old wives' tale that we know to be true.