

Flossing INSTRUCTIONS

1. Take out a piece of floss equal to the distance from your hand to your elbow.
2. Wrap the ends of the floss around the middle finger of each hand so that you end up with about 10-15 cm between.
3. Use your index fingers and thumbs to hold and control the floss.
4. Slide the floss between your teeth, always staying against the side of your tooth, and move the floss gently under the gums. Try not to 'snap' the floss between your teeth.
5. Form a 'c-shape' around the tooth and wipe the tooth two or three times by moving the floss up and down.
6. Make sure you floss both sides of every tooth – even the backs of the last molars.
7. Brush your teeth after flossing!



Flossing tips:

Flossing removes the plaque and bacteria that the toothbrush cannot reach between your teeth.

If you do not floss, you are missing the plaque from more than one-third of your tooth surface!

Unwind your floss when needed so that you use a clean piece for each tooth.

Floss in the same pattern every day so you don't forget any teeth.

Flossing takes practice – keep trying!

Your gums may bleed when you first begin to floss; if bleeding does not stop after a few days, please see your oral health care provider.

Floss to prevent periodontal disease, cavities and bad breath. If you are still having difficulty flossing, please speak to your oral health care provider for other suggestions to clean between your teeth.

I have... GINGIVITIS?



If you have any dental questions or concerns please contact York Region *Health Connection* at:

1-800-361-5653

TTY 1-866-252-9933

Ask to speak with a Registered Dental Hygienist

For more information please visit our website:

www.york.ca/teeth



YORK REGION COMMUNITY and HEALTH SERVICES

I have... GINGIVITIS?



What is GINGIVITIS?

Gingivitis is the medical word for 'gum disease'.
Gingivitis is the inflammation of the gums.
It can lead to more serious dental problems.
It is usually treatable and preventable.

Signs and symptoms of gingivitis

- Bleeding gums, especially when you brush and floss
- Bright red or purple-red gums
- Swollen or puffy gums
- Shiny gums
- Gums are sore when they are touched
- Always having bad breath
- Loose adult teeth
- Receding gums

How did I get gingivitis?

Gingivitis starts with dental biofilm, more commonly known as PLAQUE.



What is PLAQUE?

Plaque is a clear, sticky layer of bacteria (germs), food debris and saliva that is on your teeth and near the gums every day.

If plaque is **not** brushed or flossed off your teeth every day then it will begin to harden on your teeth within one to two days.

What is TARTAR?

Tartar is hardened plaque that cannot be brushed or flossed off your teeth.

Will gingivitis go away?

Yes, gingivitis is reversible!

What can I do?

BRUSH at least twice per day and FLOSS at least once per day to remove the plaque and bacteria.



What if I don't brush or floss REGULARLY?

Plaque will continue to form and harden into tartar on your teeth.

Tartar can also trap more plaque on it and it will form under the gums.

Tartar and plaque under the gums that is not cleaned off your teeth by a dental professional will lead to the breakdown of the supporting structures of your teeth (gums and bone).



What is PERIODONTAL DISEASE?

Periodontal disease is a serious chronic bacterial infection that affects the gums and bone supporting your teeth.

Periodontal disease is **not reversible**.

Periodontal disease can lead to tooth loss.

