

Can Your Toothbrush Make You Sick?

You may have heard talk about the germs that can live on your toothbrush and wondered if it's cause for concern. It's a fact that there are more bacteria in the mouth than anywhere else in your body, and some of them get on your toothbrush when you brush your teeth. In addition, most people store their toothbrush in the bathroom, which tends to contain numerous airborne bacteria because of the warm, moist environment.



Does your toothbrush need sterilization?

Although studies have shown that various microorganisms can grow on toothbrushes after use, there is no clinical evidence that soaking a toothbrush in an antibacterial mouth rinse or using a commercially available toothbrush sanitizer has any positive or negative effect on health.

While these products don't do any harm and company studies show they do succeed in removing germs, they are not necessary to prevent the spread of

germs. Simpler methods can be used to limit the spread of germs from toothbrushes.

Keep in mind that some toothbrush cleaning methods, including use of a dishwasher or microwave oven, could damage the toothbrush. Manufacturers may not have designed their products to withstand the extreme conditions of heat. The cleaning effectiveness of the toothbrush might be decreased if it is damaged.

What can you do?

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), a simple regimen for toothbrush care is sufficient to remove most microorganisms from your toothbrush and limit the spread of disease. Here are some common-sense steps you can take:



- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water before and after brushing or flossing.
- After brushing, rinse your toothbrush with warm water and store it upright to air-dry.

- Don't cover your toothbrush or place it in a closed container until it is completely dry. A moist environment can foster bacterial growth.
- Use a completely dry toothbrush. Everyone should have two toothbrushes to give ample time (24 hours) for it to dry out in between uses.
- Don't share a toothbrush with anyone. Also, don't store toothbrushes in a way that might cause them to touch and spread germs.
- Replace your toothbrush every three or four months. Dentists recommend this practice not as prevention against contamination, but because toothbrushes wear out and become less effective at cleaning teeth.
- Always replace your toothbrush after a cold or other illness to prevent contamination.
- If you or someone else in your family is sick, that person should use a different tube of toothpaste (travel size, for example), to prevent spreading germs to other toothbrushes.

Staff Gossip...

Linda: Linda is on to more home improvement projects. She has started work on a kitchen remodel. Good Luck with that Linda! (For those of you who have done a kitchen remodel, you know what I mean.)

Shannon: Shannon is dreaming of sunshine and summertime. It has been a long and wet winter, so think sunny thoughts. She just started a new landscaping project at home so if you have any good plant suggestions, let her know. It has also been a long wait for American Idol to return and she wants everyone who watches Idol to remember to vote for the people you want to stay and not the bad people because you think it's funny! (Remember Sangia?)

DaiLene: DaiLene has also been busy with home improvements and watching

her beautiful boys get bigger everyday. Max is 2 1/2 now and acting like a normal "Terrible Two" (Yikes! We feel for you, DaiLene). Jake is getting close to crawling so it won't be long before she is running around after two busy boys.

Marci: Marci went to Utah to have Christmas with her family and to meet her 3 month old neice for the first time. Marci's daughter Cydney had her 1st birthday and 1st sledding adventure over the holidays. Happy Birthday Miss Cydney!

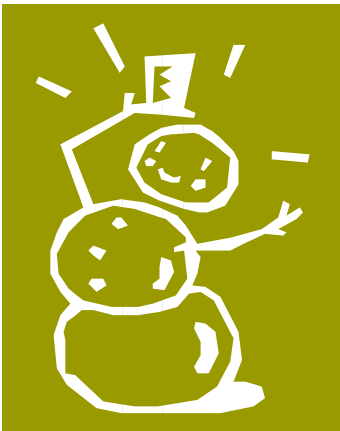
Brittany: Brittany has been enjoying being 21 and the lifestyle that comes with it. She is excited to be getting a new puppy this April and will share more info about her once she arrives. Brittany says "Bring On 2010!"

Julianna: Julianna and her husband

Wes enjoy hanging out with friends and family and playing with their 2 labs. This year's annual bow hunting trip was a success for them and they look forward to all of their future camping and hunting trips.

Dr. Marty: Dr. Marty has been busy organizing a future dental services mission with a group of local dental professionals. A lot of time and planning goes into a trip like this and we will give you updates along the way. He has also been enjoying watching his daughters grow. Brielle Grace will be three months in February (pictured) and Madison Michelle turns two in April. (Oh, how time flies!)





Martin E. Burbano, DMD, PC

Pacific Avenue Dental Clinic

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Check out the Kids Corner page on our website at www.padentalclinic.com for fun games and puzzles that kids can play and to learn more about keeping their teeth strong and healthy.

Fun Dental Facts

- Dental students in Japan practice on robots.
- Prehistoric kids almost never had cavities because they didn't eat sugar.
- One in every 2,000 babies is born with a tooth.
- The average human produces 25,000 quarts of spit in a lifetime...enough to fill two swimming pools!
- Cats have 30 teeth and dogs have 42.
- Close to 3 million miles of dental floss is purchased in the United States every year.
- The Statue of Liberty's mouth is three feet wide.
- An elephant's tooth can weigh more than six pounds!
- Every person has a unique tongue print.
- It takes 17 muscles to smile but 43 to frown.
- Teeth are as unique as fingerprints! Even identical twins have different dental patterns.
- The first electric toothbrush was sold 40 years ago.
- People don't chew up and down; they chew side to side just like cows chew!
- An ape has teeth shaped just like a human's.

National Children's Dental Health Month

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Each February, the American Dental Association (ADA) sponsors National Children's Dental Health Month to raise awareness about the importance of oral health. NCDHM messages and materials have reached millions of people in communities across the

country.

Developing good habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits helps children get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums.

Whether you're a member of the dental team, a teacher or a parent, the ADA has free online re-

sources that can help you with oral health presentations, ideas for the classroom and coloring and activity sheets that can be used as handouts. The ADA also has booklets, videos and other materials available for purchase through the [ADA Catalog](http://ada.org).

Please direct all questions to ncdhm@ada.org.

It's Hard to Erase A Good Smile



Cheshire Cat

Diana Reiss

National Children's Dental Health Month

Happy Birthday to the Toothbrush!

The toothbrush, as we know it, turns 125!

Oral hygiene in 1880s America was nothing to smile about. Thanks to soaring sugar consumption and fluoride-free water, cavities were commonplace. Jars of tooth-cleaning paste went for jaw-dropping prices — roughly half a day's wages for a manual laborer — and expensive, hand-carved toothbrushes

were as likely to appear in the average home as the tooth fairy. Enter Manhattan dentist Meyer Rhein, who, with the Florence Manufacturing Company of Massachusetts, engineered a mass-produced, budget-friendly brush. Crafted of animal bone and boar's-hair bristles, it had its drawbacks — the bristles trapped bacteria and frequently fell out — but for

35 cents, it helped keep molars, bicuspids, canines, and incisors clean more than a century before the Sonicare.

