



### Maintaining Your Oral Health Information leaflet.

Key points:

- Your **Oral Health** is linked to your overall general health and health related issues such as stroke.
- **Gum disease** (Gingivitis) shows itself as red, swollen gums that bleed when brushed. If untreated, it is the most common cause of tooth loss.
- **Bacteria** in your mouth helps you digest food. However, if left undisturbed, bacteria multiplies rapidly.
- **Plaque** is a sticky, film of bacteria that builds up on your teeth. Plaque reacts with food, turning sugar to acid, which then dissolves the enamel on your teeth. Tooth enamel break down causes cavities on the surface of teeth.
- **Tartar** is a hard deposit that forms when plaque is not removed from teeth. Tartar bonds strongly to enamel and can only be removed effectively by a dental professional.
- **Gum disease** is a treatable, preventable condition and can be kept under control with regular, effective cleaning of your teeth, good eating habits and regular attendance at your Dental Practice.

### Oral Hygiene Instructions for your daily routine:

- Brush your teeth for 2 minutes, twice a day with a Fluoride toothpaste.
- Recognise that your teeth are a 5-sided structure and brushing only reaches 3 sides.
- Use interdental tools such as Floss/TePes to remove plaque and food debris from those hard-to-reach surfaces.
- Use interdental tools before toothbrushing, preferably twice a day. If used once a day, evening is the best time.
- After brushing don't rinse your mouth with water as it diminishes the benefits of your toothpaste. (Spit don't rinse).

### Additional tips for good oral health:

- Cut down on how often you have sugary foods and drinks.
- Change your toothbrush every 2-3 months or sooner if worn.
- Electric toothbrushes are better at removing plaque.
- Fluoride helps to protect teeth, which can reduce tooth decay.