



anti-aging

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STAY FLOSSY

Anupa Mistry

Get the flossing technique that'll make your dental hygienist proud



When it comes to oral health mistakes, many of us are guilty of skipping the floss. "People tend to skip flossing because they think it's enough to brush their teeth," explains Georgia Thomas, RDH, a dental hygienist and owner of Impressions: The Dental Hygiene Spa in Toronto. "Or, they're feeling a little lazy."

But that neglect can lead to serious conditions such as gum disease, which can end in constantly painful gums, abscesses or a mouth without teeth. Not to mention, receding and swollen gums can age a mouth. The good news, says Thomas, is that gingivitis is reversible and you can always heal the gums.

She recommends getting into the routine of flossing every night after brushing. "Once a day is enough and it's best to floss before bed to get rid of the day's accumulation of bacteria," she explains. But effective flossing depends on the right technique.

"The goal is to take floss under the gum line and not just in between teeth," she says. "Two other common mistakes include not taking enough floss, and wrapping it around the index fingers instead of the middle fingers."

Thomas says to measure out floss from the tips of your fingers to your elbow and to use middle fingers to hold the floss in place freeing up your index fingers to maneuver it.

"And not only should you remember to gently go under the gum line," says Thomas, "it's important to floss behind the last molars as well."

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