

# CLEAN MOUTH. HEALTHY SMILE.

**Brush away plaque.**

Plaque is a sticky, colorless coating of bacteria and sugars that constantly forms on our teeth. The bacteria in plaque are the main cause of cavities and gum disease. Plaque that is not removed by brushing and flossing can harden into tartar (calculus) in as little as 48 hours, and can lead to gum disease. And even possible tooth loss. After plaque turns into tartar, only your hygienist or dentist can remove it.

## Brush up your skills

Brushing your teeth freshens your breath and gives you a whiter smile. It also removes plaque and food particles from your teeth. Here are tips for effective brushing.

1. Angle the bristles next to the outer surface of your teeth toward the gum line.
2. Gently move the brush in a circular motion.
3. Gently scrub all the outer surfaces of the upper and lower teeth, making sure to reach the back teeth.
4. Using the same circular motion, brush the inside surfaces of all your teeth.
5. Scrub the chewing surfaces, especially the grooves that may collect food particles in your back teeth.
6. Use the tip of the toothbrush in a circular motion to clean the front teeth.
7. Finally, gently brush the roof of your mouth, the insides of your cheeks, and your tongue. This makes your entire mouth feel clean and may also freshen your breath.

## Your toothbrush matters

- ▶ Make sure your toothbrush fits your hand comfortably. It should be shaped so that it reaches all parts of your mouth.
- ▶ A soft bristled brush is the most effective. The bristles get down into the spaces where plaque and food particles hide. Soft bristles are also less likely to harm teeth and gums.
- ▶ Replace your toothbrush regularly (approximately every 3 months).
- ▶ Ask your dentist or hygienist about options for a powered toothbrush.

## Helpful hints for brushing success

- ▶ Brush your teeth at least twice a day with fluoride toothpaste. It is recommended to brush your teeth for two minutes
- ▶ Brush gently. The tips of the bristles do the cleaning. Don't squash them.
- ▶ Change the position of the brush frequently. Move slowly across all the surfaces of every tooth.
- ▶ Floss daily to remove plaque from between your teeth and under your gum line, where your toothbrush may not reach. That's where gum disease often begins.

**Keep your smile healthy. Practice good brushing and flossing at home. And make sure you're up to date with your dental cleanings and exams. Call your dentist today to make an appointment.**

**Together, all the way.®**



This document is provided by Cigna solely for informational purposes to promote customer health. It does not constitute medical advice and is not intended to be a substitute for proper dental care provided by a dentist. Cigna assumes no responsibility for any circumstances arising out of the use, misuse, interpretation or application of any information supplied in this document. Always consult with your dentist for appropriate examinations, treatment, testing and care recommendations.

All Cigna products and services are provided exclusively by or through operating subsidiaries of Cigna Corporation, including Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company, Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, Cigna HealthCare of Connecticut, Inc., and Cigna Dental Health, Inc. and its subsidiaries. The Cigna name, logo, and other Cigna marks are owned by Cigna Intellectual Property, Inc. All pictures are used for illustrative purposes only.

859160 b 12/18 © 2018 Cigna. Some content provided under license.