



Plaque and Tartar Control: Safe and Effective Methods for Oral Health

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Description

Maintaining oral hygiene is essential for overall health, and one of the key aspects of this is the removal of plaque and tartar from teeth. Plaque, a sticky film of bacteria, forms on teeth every day. If not removed, it can harden into tartar (also known as calculus), which can lead to gum disease and tooth decay. This article explores safe and effective methods for removing plaque and tartar, emphasizing the importance of both professional dental care and good at-home practices. Plaque forms when bacteria in the mouth mix with sugary or starchy foods. This bacterium produces acids that can damage tooth enamel and lead to cavities. If plaque is not removed through regular brushing and flossing, it can mineralize into tartar, a hard substance that adheres to teeth and can only be removed by a dental professional. Tartar buildup can cause gum inflammation (gingivitis) and, if left untreated, can progress to more serious gum disease (periodontitis).

Brush your teeth at least twice a day using a soft-bristled toothbrush. Use gentle, circular motions to cover all surfaces of the teeth, including the front, back, and chewing surfaces. Use a fluoride toothpaste to strengthen tooth enamel and reduce the risk of decay. Some toothpaste brands offer formulations specifically designed to control tartar buildup. Floss daily to remove plaque and food particles between teeth where a toothbrush can't reach. Gently slide the floss between each tooth and along the gum line to remove debris and plaque. Use an antibacterial mouthwash to reduce bacteria

in the mouth, helping to prevent plaque formation. Look for a mouthwash that contains fluoride to provide added protection against tooth decay. Reduce consumption of sugary and starchy foods that contribute to plaque formation. Opt for a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. Foods high in fiber can help stimulate saliva production, which naturally cleanses the mouth.

Drink plenty of water throughout the day to help wash away food particles and bacteria. Staying hydrated also promotes saliva production, which is essential for maintaining oral health. Visit your dentist every six months for a thorough examination and cleaning. Regular checkups allow your dentist to identify and address any dental issues early on. During a professional cleaning, your dentist or dental hygienist will use special tools to remove plaque and tartar from above and below the gum line. This process, known as scaling, is essential for preventing gum disease and maintaining overall oral health. If tartar buildup has led to gum disease, your dentist may recommend root planing, a deeper cleaning procedure that smooths the root surfaces to help gums reattach to the teeth. This can reduce pockets that trap bacteria and plaque. Electric toothbrushes can be more effective at removing plaque than manual ones. They offer consistent brushing motions and often include timers to ensure you brush for the recommended two minutes. Dental sealants are protective coatings applied to the chewing surfaces of the back teeth. They act as a barrier against plaque and acids, particularly in areas prone to cavities.

If you have braces or other orthodontic appliances, it's important to maintain meticulous oral hygiene. Special tools like interdental brushes and water flossers can help clean around brackets and wires. Smoking contributes to tartar buildup and increases the risk of gum disease. Quitting smoking can significantly improve your oral health.

Conclusion

Keeping your teeth clean and free of plaque and tartar is fundamental to maintaining good oral health. Combining diligent at-home care with regular professional dental visits ensures your teeth and gums remain healthy. By brushing and flossing daily, using mouthwash, making smart dietary choices, and staying hydrated, you can effectively control plaque. Regular dental checkups and professional cleanings are essential for removing tartar and preventing gum disease. Adopting these practices will help you maintain a bright, healthy smile and prevent dental issues in the long run.

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