

# Information Sheet No 3

## Cleaning Your Teeth?

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### Why Do We Need To Brush Our Teeth?

Tooth brushing is carried out to remove the sticky bacteria that form a harmful film on the teeth (dental plaque). These bacteria cause gum disease that is the most common disease in the world. The bacteria also act on sticky foods forming acid that causes tooth decay.

### What Type Of Food Is Best?

When buying a toothbrush, choose a small headed, medium strength brush that has a comfortable handle to grip. You need to replace the brush about every three months.

### HOW TO USE YOUR TOOTHBRUSH

#### TOOTHBRUSHING POSITION

##### BACK TEETH

Place the toothbrush at an angle where the teeth and gum meet, partly on the neck of the tooth and partly on the gum margin

##### FRONT TEETH

Brush the fronts and backs of the teeth as shown

#### TOOTHBRUSHING ACTION

Press the brush gently into the crevice at the gum margin. Gently brush the teeth using a short circular action, just brushing 2 or 3 teeth at a time. Allow the tufts of the brush to slide between the teeth, as plaque collects in the crevices around the necks of the teeth.

Brush the chewing surfaces with short backwards and forwards gentle scrubbing actions