

## DENTAL IMPLANT MAINTENANCE

Effective oral hygiene is a major factor contributing to implant longevity. In order to get the longest possible service from your dental implant:

1. **Clean the implant at least twice a day.** Cleaning at the end of the day, before retiring for the night, is particularly effective because saliva flow decreases and bacteria accumulate during sleep.
2. **Clean the implant gently but thoroughly.** You may be hesitant to clean the exposed portion because you don't want to disturb the implant. Cleaning the exposed portion will not disturb the implant.
3. **Use effective oral hygiene aids.** We recommend the following items for effective, gentle cleaning of dental implants:
  - Soft nylon multi-tufted toothbrush, using a gentle, sweeping motion
  - Motorized soft multi-tufted toothbrush such as Oral B, Sonicare, Interplak, etc.
  - Low abrasive toothpaste
  - Dental floss or similar material to clean around the implant.
    - If necessary, use a floss threading device with the dental floss if necessary to access the implant.
    - Or use pipe cleaners with synthetic bristles, nylon yarn, strips of cotton or gauze or even string, depending on availability and access.
  - Inter-dental brush (such as a Proxabrush)
    - Inter-dental brushes used to clean implants should have a coated center wire to prevent metal-metal contact with the implant. They can also be used to massage gum tissue around the implant to keep it firm and resilient.
4. **Use an antimicrobial solution** (This also can be used on a toothbrush or inter-dental brush.)
  - Antimicrobial mouth rinses:
    - Chlorhexidine digluconate (Peridex and others)
    - Phenolics (Listerine and others)
  - Oral irrigation
    - Because of its destructive potential, use irrigation with caution. Select the lowest possible setting (flow rate) and never direct a forceful stream at the tissue-implant junction.