

Keeping your health and wellbeing in the know

MyHealthTALK

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Courtesy of Asset Health



The Right Toothbrush is Key for Good Oral Health

Over 40 percent of Americans don't know how frequently to replace their toothbrushes, according to the American Dental Association (ADA). If it's been more than four months, then it's time to toss and replace it! The right toothbrush will not only polish your pearly whites, it will prevent bacteria buildup and inflammation, which can lead to a host of unwanted health conditions. Here are some tips that experts share on what elements of a toothbrush count the most:

SIZE The most effective and easiest-to-use toothbrush head for most adults will be a half-inch wide and one-inch tall, which will allow for easy access to all surfaces of your teeth. "If you are straining to open wide enough to let the brush in, the brush is probably too big," says Richard H. Price, DMD, consumer adviser for the ADA.

BRISTLES A soft brush is your best bet because it's the most comfortable and safest choice. If the bristles are too stiff, they can hurt your gums. But, "once the bristles lose their normal flexibility and start to break apart, change your toothbrush," says Price. If bristles appear to be frayed, you should replace your toothbrush sooner.



HANDLE The toothbrush should have a long enough handle so you can comfortably hold it in your hand. Fancy padded grips that seem to be ergonomically designed have no effect on how well you brush, unless you find them easier to hold, says Kimberly Harms, DDS, who is also a consumer adviser for the ADA.

SHAPE Many dentists consider both an electric brush with a round, rotating head and a traditional, rectangular manual brush effective if you are using the proper method of brushing. For people with narrow jaws, the ADA recommends selecting a brush with a tapered head.

*10 Toothbrush Mistakes -- and How to Fix Them," Lindsey Grant, webmd.com, accessed Sept. 4, 2014.
*Anatomy of a Toothbrush," Emmy Haak, oprah.com, April 2014.
*Choosing a Toothbrush: The Pros and Cons of Electric and Disposable," webmd.com, accessed Sept. 4, 2014.

Snacks You Never Knew Could *Improve Your Mood*



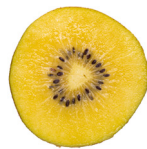
Blueberries

This berry's flavonoid compounds are believed to improve cognition by increasing oxygen flow to the brain, which is why some researchers link blueberries with memory-enhancing benefits.



Edamame

Edamame, or young soybeans, are high in folate, a B vitamin that might help you beat the blues.



Gold Kiwi

This fruit is rich in vitamin C, which may account for its reviving properties. Vitamin C is vital for triggering key enzymes involved in energy production and brain function.



Walnuts

These nuts are a great source of fiber, antioxidants and omega-3 fatty acids. These are nutrients that may help you keep your cool during anxiety-inducing situations by improving the ability of your blood vessels to respond to various stimuli in a healthy manner.



Dark Chocolate

A morsel of dark chocolate (about 1.4 ounces) can lower the stress hormones in your body, decreasing your anxiety and giving you a better chance to complete a task.



Sunflower Seeds

These seeds are high in folate and magnesium, which are vital in controlling and improving mood. Maintaining adequate, stable levels of magnesium helps us reach a calm and relaxed state.

*Eat Smarter for a Healthier Brain," Carol Sorgen, webmd.com, accessed Sept. 15, 2014.
*Seven Foods That Boost Every Type of Bad Mood," Sarah Jio, womansday.com, accessed Sept. 9, 2014.
*Snacks on a Mission," Johannah Sakimura, oprah.com, April 2014.
*Super Snacks: Five Best Snacks for Mood," healthyliving.msn.com, accessed Sept. 9, 2014.

BREATHING TECHNIQUES That Can BENEFIT Your Health



Did you know there is an efficient way to breathe that may improve your health while doing so? Many of us take short, shallow chest breaths while subconsciously tightening our abs, which is wildly inefficient, according to Jane Pernotto Ehrman, a behavioral health specialist at the Cleveland Clinic Center for Lifestyle Medicine. Rethink the way you inhale and exhale and give these breathing techniques a try!

BELLY BREATHING

Benefit:

Helps you relax or relieve stress

Method:

Sit or lie flat in a comfortable position, and place one hand on your belly just below your ribs and the other hand on your chest. Take your time with each breath.

4-7-8 BREATHING

Benefit:

Acts like a natural tranquilizer to help you relax and fall asleep faster

Method:

This breathing technique can be performed sitting or lying down. Put the tip of your tongue just behind your upper teeth and hold it there throughout the exercise. Fully exhale through your mouth and create a gentle whoosh sound – think ocean rhythms! Close your mouth and inhale gently through your nose for a count of four. Now, hold your breath for seven counts and follow with an eight-count whoosh-like exhale through your mouth. Finish three more cycles and repeat every five minutes until you fall asleep.

MORNING BREATHING

Benefit:

Relieves muscle stiffness and clears clogged breathing passages

Method:

While standing, bend forward from the waist with your knees slightly bent, allowing your arms to hang near the floor. As you inhale slowly and deeply, come back to a standing position by rolling up slowly, lifting your head last. Hold your breath for just a few seconds in this standing position. Exhale slowly as you go back to the original position, bending forward from the waist.

SHINING SKULL BREATHING

Benefit:

Alleviates allergies and asthma

Method:

Start with a deep inhale through your nose, and then breathe out short, powerful bursts while exhaling, about one per second for 10 seconds. That's one set. Begin with three sets and build as you go. Be cautious, this breathing can increase your heart rate, so consult your doctor first if you have high blood pressure or another heart condition.

PAIN IMAGERY BREATHING

Benefit:

Eases discomfort

Method:

Close your eyes and picture your body growing relaxed. Visualize oxygen filling any areas of tension with comfort and calmness as you breathe from your belly. Then, each time you exhale, imagine the pain leaving.

GROUNDING BREATHING

Benefit:

May relieve nausea by promoting peristalsis, the muscular contractions that move food down into the stomach

Method:

Imagine walking barefoot down a long stone staircase. As you focus on how cool the stones feel, inhale slowly through the nose for four counts. Then, squeeze your lips and exhale for eight to 10 counts as you picture taking a step down. Continue until the nausea has passed.

"The Breathing Cure," Leslie Goldman, oprah.com, April 2014.
"Stress Management: Breathing Exercises for Relaxation,"
Healthwise Staff, webmd.com, May 15, 2012.