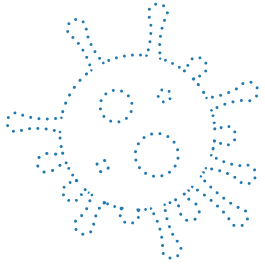


# PRACTICE DENTAL DISTANCING DURING COVID-19



## Store your toothbrush safely

Avoid side-by-side storage along with the other members of your household. After using it, disinfect the handle.

## Wash your hands before and after brushing or flossing

The CDC recommends washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.<sup>1</sup>

## Avoid touching your mouth (and eyes and nose too!)

Germ can be picked up by our hands and get into the body through mucous membranes in your eyes, nose, and mouth, a gateway to the throat and lungs.

## Toss your toothbrush if you get sick

Replace your toothbrush so you don't risk getting sick again. Even if you aren't sick, replace your toothbrush every 3 to 4 months or sooner if the bristles look worn out.<sup>3</sup>

## Don't share toothbrushes, cups or other utensils

Toothbrushes and other utensils that go in your mouth can still have germs on them even after being visibly rinsed clean.<sup>2</sup>

## Don't contaminate the toothpaste

Be careful if you share a tube of toothpaste with someone else. Don't touch the tip of the tube directly onto your toothbrush. Squeeze a bit of toothpaste onto a Q-tip or piece of wax paper, then apply it to the bristles. Remember, you only need a pea-sized amount.

## Understand your state's dental guidelines

The American Dental Association recommends that you refer to your state's COVID-19 safety guidelines to determine the dental care available for your area.

## Share a smile – for yourself and others!

Research has found that smiling, even when you don't feel like it, can help improve your mood, lower your heart rate and help your body deal with stress better.<sup>4,5</sup>

United **Concordia**



Sources:  
1. Consistent Detection of 2019 Novel Coronavirus in Saliva; Oxford University Press; February 2020.  
2. Toothbrush Care; ada.org; 2020. 3. Toothbrushes; ada.org; 2020. 4. Effects of smiling manipulation on negative cognitive process during self-focused attention; Shinrigaku Kenkyu; April 2010.  
5. Grin and bear it: the influence of manipulated facial expression on the stress response; Psychological Science; 2012.

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