

## Beating the cold and flu bugs with good oral hygiene

It's a common misconception that cold and flu viruses are transmitted by air-borne particles-from a cough in the car or a sneeze in the office.

Recent research reveals that cold and flu viruses are most commonly transmitted by physical contact.

Good oral hygiene can help you to prevent catching the latest lurgy.

Here are some simple tips ...

- Wash your hands frequently with antibacterial soap-especially before flossing.
- Avoid touching your face after contact with someone who has a cold or flu-wash your hands first.
- Don't bite your nails or rub your eyes.
- Store your toothbrushes in the open air, with the heads up, so they can dry well. Germs and viruses love a constantly damp environment.
- Use two toothbrushes-one for the morning and one for the night-so the brushes dry thoroughly.
- Change your toothbrushes regularly-especially after a cold or flu.
- Don't share toothbrushes.
- Don't allow your household's toothbrushes to touch each other.
- When you have a cold, disinfect your toothbrush with peroxide or an antiseptic mouthrinse (such as Savacol), then air dry.
- Stick out your tongue and say ahhh ... Clean your tongue with a tongue scraper or your toothbrush.
- If you use a mouthguard, night splint, denture or orthodontic appliance, disinfect with an antiseptic mouthrinse at least once a week.

Stay healthy and keep smiling!

See also ...

- Duo column: How not to catch a cold
- Personal dental hygiene plan
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