



## Replace Your Toothbrush Frequently

Most people need to replace their toothbrush more frequently than they do now.

First, always start with a soft toothbrush, if you use a manual brush. To clean your teeth and gums without hurting delicate gum tissue, only a soft brush is recommended. Remember, you are cleaning and massaging your gums, so be gentle with your brushing. Avoid back-and-forth scrubbing motions, as this can cause your gums to recede and expose root surfaces that can be very sensitive and decay easily.

**Replace your toothbrush every two to three months.** The brush bristles become worn and do not clean as well as they should, but starting with harder bristles is not the answer! If you have

a cold, the flu, or other illness, you should replace your toothbrush once you begin to feel better. Bacteria and viruses can thrive in wet bristles and can cause you to become sick again.

If you use an electric toothbrush, you should replace the brush every three months. Again, if you get sick, change the brush once you feel better. Most of the bristles on electric toothbrushes are relatively soft. If the brush has more than one setting, use the gentlest mode. With electric toothbrushes, remember to use very little pressure against the teeth to avoid trauma to fragile gum tissue and prevent abrasion of root surfaces.