

# Proper Flossing

Flossing is an essential part of the tooth-cleaning process because it removes plaque from between teeth and at the gumline, where periodontal disease often begins.

If you find using floss awkward or difficult, ask your dental hygienist about the variety of dental floss holders or interdental cleaning devices that are available.

Wind 18" of floss around middle fingers of each hand. Pinch floss between thumbs and index fingers, leaving a 1"- 2" length in between. Use thumbs to direct floss between upper teeth.



Keep a 1" - 2" length of floss taut between fingers. Use index fingers to guide floss between contacts of the lower teeth.



Gently guide floss between the teeth by using a zig-zag motion. DO NOT SNAP FLOSS BETWEEN YOUR TEETH. Contour floss around the side of the tooth.



Slide floss up and down against the tooth surface and under the gumline. Floss each tooth thoroughly with a clean section of floss.



--Illustrations adapted by and used courtesy of the John O. Butler Company--

Source: American Dental Hygienists' Association – [www.adha.org](http://www.adha.org)

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