

understood how important it is to brush the teeth after eating, and as the secretions of the mouth are more acid at night it will also be seen that the teeth should be brushed before retiring. The majority of toothbrushes upon the market are totally unfit for the use intended. A toothbrush should be made of irregular tufts of bristles, slightly curved to conform to the contour of the dental arch and converging to a point, and the brush itself be small enough to reach every part of the mouth. In brushing lay the side of the brush against the teeth, the bristles pointing toward the apices of the roots, and turn the brush toward the cutting surfaces of the teeth. This will cause the bristles to spread out and penetrate the crevices between the teeth, brush the more exposed surfaces, and give the gums a healthy massage. Keep the mouth open, think of what you are doing and be careful to brush the inside as well as the outside of the teeth. Never close the mouth and attempt to save time by brushing the upper and lower together, for neither will receive proper attention. It is a good idea to make it a point to devote three minutes (by the clock) to the operation and see that the back of the wisdom tooth receives a proper cleansing.

Brushing in the manner just described will prevent recession of the gums, whereas brushing transversely will destroy the delicate attachment of the gums and cause a recession which can seldom be restored. The adoption of this method of cleansing in cases where, from improper brushing, the gums have receded, will be found to stop the trouble, although the tissues once lost cannot be replaced. Brushing transversely also has a tendency to wear away the enamel and help to form erosion.

Brushing the teeth alone with water is not sufficient. A tooth powder should be used every time the teeth are brushed. This may seem a bold assertion, but in the opinion of the writer a tooth powder which may be used at all may be used at all times; any powder containing the smallest trace of grit should be discarded.

A good antiseptic antacid mouth wash is also a very good adjunct to the dental toilet, for after properly brushing the teeth some bacteria may still remain in inaccessible places and these the mouth wash will destroy or render innocuous.

In some mouths it is wise to pass waxed dental floss silk between the teeth before brushing them, in fact it can do no harm in any mouth, although some people become so adept in brushing the teeth