

Four New Year's Resolutions Your Dentist Will Love

This time of year is not just about gifts and celebrations – for many, it's also about taking stock of the year that has been and reflecting on what can be better for the year ahead.

Many of us even make promises to ourselves so that we feel more accountable for making certain improvements. You might resolve to spend more time with family, follow a long-held professional dream, or just get to the gym more often.

As a dentist, I'd like to recommend that at least one of the promises you make to yourself this year be about your dental health and here's why. The health of your teeth and mouth are closely linked to the health of your whole body, and research has even shown associations between poor oral health and diabetes, heart disease, and osteoporosis. That's why it's so important to care for your teeth and gums. So, if you know that you could stand to do a little better, start by adding a couple of these dental health resolutions to your list.

1. Floss Like a Boss

Flossing is the single biggest thing that most people can do to improve their dental health, yet it's the thing that is most often neglected. The fact is that hardly anyone particularly likes flossing, but it's something you need to do every day if you truly wish to have healthy teeth and gums.

One challenge many have is that they simply don't know how to floss properly, so it ends up taking a long time and not really getting the job done anyway. If that's the case for you, ask your dentist for a quick tutorial at your next check-up or check out this dentist's genius one-minute flossing technique. And if you really loathe the traditional string

floss, consider investing in a water flosser, which may make the job a little more pleasant for you.

2. Commit to 2 Minutes

Did you know that to effectively clean your teeth you're supposed to be brushing for a full 2 minutes in the morning and at night before bed? Even though you may be using your toothbrush two times a day, chances are that you're not brushing for long enough, in which case you're not keeping your teeth as clean and healthy as you should be.

Try to get in the habit of using your phone's timer app or a basic kitchen timer to ensure that you're brushing for 120 seconds. Some electric toothbrushes even come with a 2-minute timer so you can just keep brushing until it goes off. It might feel like a long time at first if you're used to brushing for only a minute or so, but consider the time a chance to reflect on the day that's been or on the one ahead.

3. Get Yourself Something Nice

Sometimes all we need to motivate us to take better care of ourselves is some new toy that makes the routine a bit more fun. If all you've got is a standard toothbrush and string floss, think about treating yourself to some new tools that can reignite your interest in oral care. Here are a few suggestions that are both cool and useful:

- Water flosser
- Electric toothbrush
- Wall-mounted toothpaste dispenser
- Fancy toothpaste
- Tongue scraper
- Toothbrush sanitizer

4. Say No to Soda

If you're still guzzling soda on a regular basis, now is the time to quit. Both regular and diet or sugar-free soda is extremely harmful to your oral health and overall health. The huge amount of sugar that is in soda and many other sweet beverages rots your teeth and widens your waistline at a dangerous rate.

Your brain might not register it as you enjoy these drinks, but you should look up exactly how much sugar you're ingesting each time you down one of these beverages. It just might be the wake-up call you need in order to commit to giving up those sweet drinks. And for a replacement, try the healthier and more economical alternative of plain carbonated water flavored with a bit of natural fruit juice.

As you can see from these simple tips, improving your oral health doesn't require any massive lifestyle changes, just a few tweaks to your everyday routines.

And taking on just a couple of these resolutions will help you make sure that 2016 is your healthiest year yet.

Recommened Reading:

- *Heal Cavities, Gum Disease, Naturally with Organic Oral Care – Toothpaste recipes included*
- *Detox Cheap and Easy Without Fasting – Recipes Included*