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Between You and Me... Is Your Smile (1971)

American Dental Association

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Between You and Me... Is Your Smile

You probably want to make your smile as healthy and attractive as possible. Of course, everyone would. But can you believe, doing this really isn't so hard?

Rreally. It doesn't take a fantastic effort: Brush your teeth. Visit your dentist regularly. Eat a good diet, not a lot of sweets. Simple enough?

Sure. But some people feel even these little things are a bother. Maybe they're just not convinced the effort really pays off.

Understandable. But they're wrong.

It does.

For a Lifetime of Smiles . . .
Take the Time.

What Toothbrushing Does For You

Most people know that brushing your teeth makes your mouth feel better, look better, and smell better. But what you may not know is that brushing also removes *plaque*, an almost invisible film of bacteria that collects on your teeth and gums. Plaque is important because it helps cause dental disease.

Take *tooth decay*, for example: Bacteria in the plaque react with the foods you eat (especially the sugars and refined starches) to form acids that dissolve tooth enamel. This opens the way for bacteria to invade the tooth. The possible result: a painful toothache and, even worse, loss of the tooth.

Or take *bleeding gums*, the most common sign of gum disease: Built-up plaque and hard deposits around your teeth tend to irritate your gums. This makes them tender and likely to bleed when you brush. That may be as far as this problem goes while you're still young; but what starts now can mean losing a lot of teeth when you're older—say, thirty! Really. You see, eventually, the bacteria may lead to the destruction of the bones that support your teeth. That means real trouble: *periodontal disease*, the major cause of tooth loss in adults.



Splurge! Buy a New One

**Brush Your Teeth
At Least Once Each Day**

Toothbrushing helps you head off all these oral problems by removing the plaque that forms every day in your mouth. Naturally, though, how often and how well you do it make a difference. While, it's better to brush more often, be sure you do brush *at least once* each day so that the buildup of plaque in your mouth is kept under control.

Use A Decent Toothbrush

Does this look familiar?

**How Well
You Do It Counts**

Your dentist can recommend the best brushing technique for you. He may suggest that you use dental *floss*, a special thread for cleaning between your teeth where your brush can't reach.

Whatever method he suggests, one thing is sure: You've got to do a thorough job. Clean every surface of all your teeth. If you're a thirty-second brusher, about all you do is exercise your arms!

**Some Toothpastes
Help Prevent Cavities**

Several *fluoride* toothpastes accepted by the American Dental Association have been found to help prevent cavities by strengthening the enamel's resistance to decay. These brands show the ADA seal or statement on their box or tube.



Incidentally, some brands of toothpaste claim to “whiten” teeth, but this can be misleading. Certain pastes do contain more (or harsher) abrasives, which remove stains by friction of the agents against the tooth enamel. But abrasives may take off a little enamel too. So if you’re considering one of those toothpastes that promises a “whiter, brighter smile,” first ask your dentist if it’s safe for *your* teeth.

The Myth of the Mouthwash

Another misleading claim from current advertising is that mouthwashes cure bad breath. Actually, in the cases where mouthwashes help, rinsing with almost anything at all, including plain water, would probably do the trick — that is, remove some food particles from your mouth.

What You Eat Affects Your Smile

As you’ve probably heard all your life, eating a lot of sweets invites tooth decay. One reason is that sugars help bacteria stick to your teeth in the form of plaque. More important, the sugars and refined starches you eat react with the bacteria in your mouth to produce enamel-destroying acids almost immediately.

So it’s wise to keep sweets like candy, cake, jelly, pastry, cookies, ice cream and soda pop to a minimum in your diet. If you can, substitute fresh fruits, nuts, potato chips, artificially



Smile Power.

sweetened foods and drinks, or even vegetables for your snacks.

If and when you do eat sweets, try to brush your teeth right away. Time is the key factor because the most harmful bacterial activity happens within the first 20 minutes.

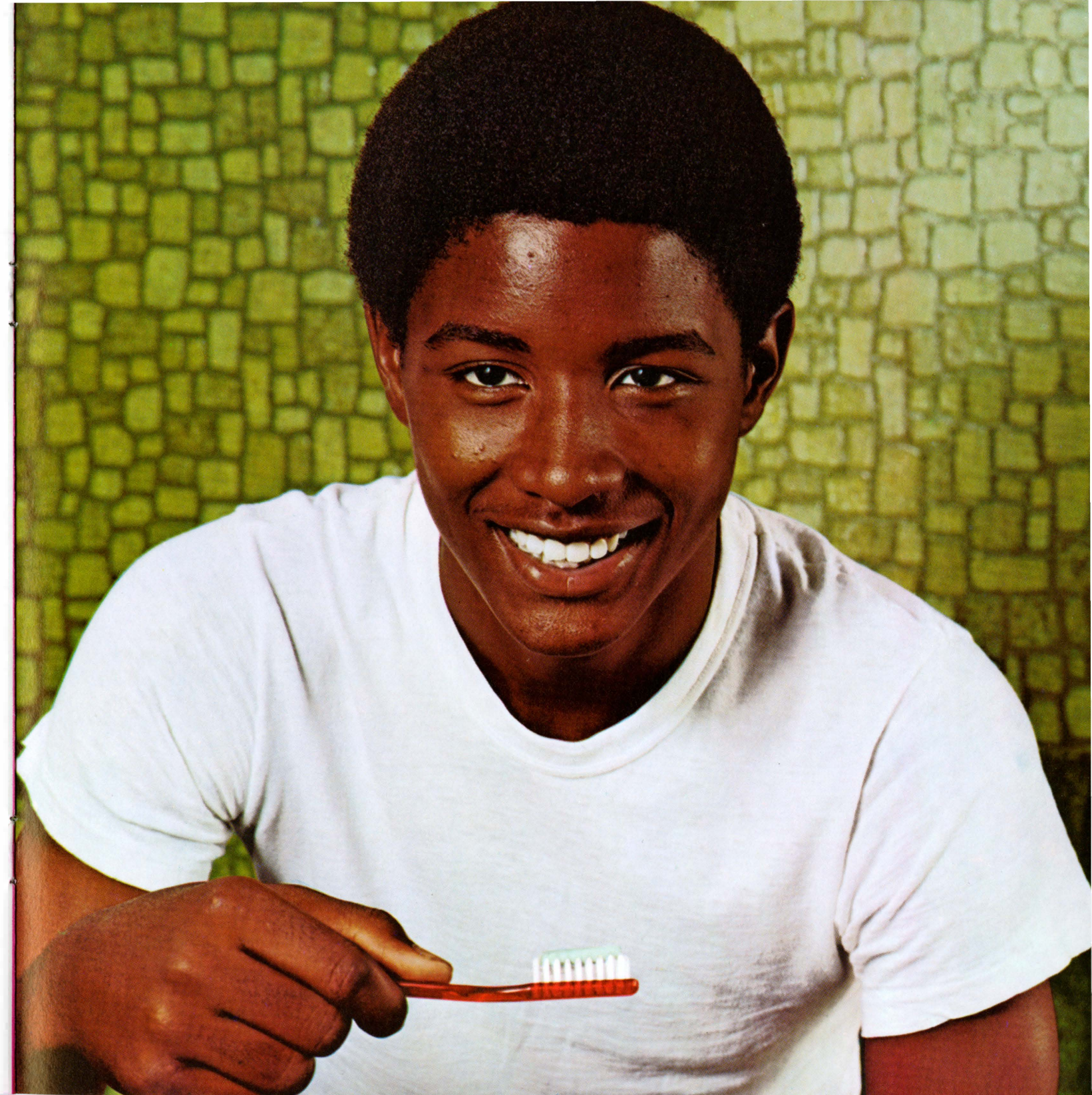
For the sake of your dental health as well as your general health, eat a good diet and, above all, avoid a lot of sweets.

Many people fear going to a dentist. They say it's because they can't stand pain.

The fact is, the pain of a bad toothache, the loss of teeth, and the damage to your health and appearance that can come from dental neglect far *outweigh* any pain that might be associated with dental treatment.

You see, if you visit your dentist regularly, he can treat dental problems *before* they get serious. People who receive professional care regularly often require only a *prophylaxis* — cleaning of their teeth to remove whatever hard deposits have built up.

Seeing Your Dentist Is Essential



"What Lovely Teeth you have,
My Pretties!"

Why not be realistic about it? See your dentist right away. Let him treat any long-standing problems that have developed. Then, make it a *habit* to visit him — every six months or whenever he suggests.

Let's Get It Straight

Your smile, that is. You really *can* get it straight. You see, crooked teeth is actually a dental condition called — *malocclusion*. It can and should be corrected by treatment — usually given by a dental specialist, an *orthodontist*. Ask your dentist about it.

Missing Teeth Are Cute — When You're Six Years Old!

But that's about the only time. And take no comfort that your dental "gaps" may be all the way in the back where nobody sees them. No matter where they happen, missing teeth can cause adjacent teeth to drift. In time, this process can come around to your more visible teeth — where you smile. And that's just one link in the chain of events that even one missing tooth can set up.

So have missing teeth *replaced*. It could save your smile.

To Puff Or Not To Puff

Here's a heavy fact to think about: Smokers of tobacco have four times the risk of death from oral cancer compared to non-smokers.



The End Of “Mommy Says So.”

If cold, hard statistics don't impress you, just consider the other things that go along with smoking — like the eventual stains on your teeth, bad breath, irritated gums and periodontal disease not to mention the cost of this habit.

Think about it. Better yet, think about the other guy (or girl) that has to be with you.

Many people first take care of their teeth because “Mommy says so.” That's all right when you're a little kid. But now, it's a different scene.

No one will nag you now about brushing your teeth, or say “No, no” when you raid the cookie jar, or lead you by the hand to the dentist every six months. No one.

That leaves just one person now to look after your dental health . . .

You.



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