



Northumbria Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

Top Tips for Teeth Brushing

Sensory Processing

Issued by the Paediatric Occupational Therapy Department

For children who struggle to process sensory information, teeth brushing can be a very stressful and unpleasant experience.

Please see below some strategies that can help with teeth brushing:

- Ask your child to stand or sit in front of a mirror to brush their teeth so they can see what is happening.
- Consider using a softer silicon bristle toothbrush initially to help tolerate the sensation on their teeth and gums before moving onto a normal toothbrush.
- Consider using a flannel with toothpaste if the child does not tolerate a toothbrush.
- Some children may prefer stronger-tasting toothpaste, so consider trying different flavours. If the taste from normal toothpaste is too strong consider using a fluoride non-flavoured toothpaste. Please see the link below to access a website with non-flavoured fluoride toothpaste: www.multi-sensoryworld.co.uk.
- Create a consistent morning and evening routine with clear visual and verbal cues that lead to toothbrushing.
- Consider using a chewable toy before teeth brushing to decrease the child's sensitivities in the mouth and help build awareness of the mouth.
- Try a face massage before teeth brushing.
- Visual timers can help children gauge when the activity will finish. Consider singing or listening to a song during teeth brushing which can reduce anxiety and help your child's understanding. Please see the resources below.

- Include the child in the process and allow them to choose their own toothbrush and toothpaste. If the child is not fully independent with brushing their teeth encourage them to complete sections of their mouth and slowly work your way up to allow them to brush their teeth.
- Some children may require increased sensation to be able to tolerate teeth brushing. Consider trying a vibrating toothbrush, encourage your child to handle the toothbrush first, then place it on the back of their hand, and allow them to put it on the outside of their cheek, and then finally into their mouth.

Additional information

Please see below some resources to help make teeth brushing a fun and engaging activity for kids.

Please see this NHS website for helpful teeth-brushing tips for children of all ages.

Children's teeth – NHS

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-teeth-and-gums/taking-care-of-childrens-teeth/>

You can access this by scanning the QR code to the right.



Video strategies for teeth brushing developed by Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust Sensory Service.

[Making Sense: Teeth Brushing](#)

You can access this by scanning the QR code to the left.

Please see the following retailers for suggested silicon toothbrushes:

dental-aesthetics.co.uk

You can access this by scanning the QR code to the right.





Unflavoured toothpaste suggestion:

multi-sensoryworld.co.uk

You can access this by scanning the QR code to the left.

Please see the following videos for inspiration for songs to sing during teeth brushing:

[The Tooth Brushing Song - The Tooth Brushing Badge - Hey Duggee Series 3 - Hey Duggee](#)

You can access this by scanning the QR code to the right.



[The Tooth Brushing Song | 2-minute tooth brushing song for kids](#)

You can access this by scanning the QR code to the left.

[Brush Your Teeth Song with Peppa Pig | Incy Wincy Spider | More Nursery Rhymes & Kids Songs](#)

You can access this by scanning the QR code to the right.



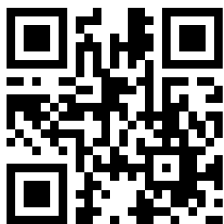
Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme (HTCS)

You may be able to claim a refund of some travel costs under this scheme. For more information visit the NHS website:

www.nhs.uk/nhsengland/healthcosts/pages/travelcosts.aspx

Alternative Formats

If you would like a copy of this information in large print, easy read, another language, audio tape or other format please call the Contact Centre on 03 44 811 8118.



British Sign Language users can use InterpretersLive! a service provided by Sign Solutions. This helps Deaf people to access BSL interpreters, and other communication professionals at any time. More information can be found on our website or by scanning the QR code to the left.

Other sources of information

NHS 111

NHS Choices

www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx

NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence)

www.nice.org.uk

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Freephone: 0800 032 0202

Email: northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk

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