



Tooth Talk

by Linda Kreutzer, RDH

Basic Brushing

Toothbrushing! How **boring!** On the contrary. Good daily brushing can keep you **out** of the dentist's chair. Have you ever been bored at the dentist?

Proper technique takes time and patience, but the end result is well worth the effort. Here are some easy tips to make your toothbrush work better for you.

1. Don't rush! Brush **all** inner and outer surfaces of **all** teeth, **every day**. Two to three times per day is recommended. Keep the bristles angled against the gumline with a gentle even pressure.

2. **Do** use a **soft** toothbrush. It's hard to believe that a soft toothbrush actually cleans plaque from teeth better than a hard brush. Hard bristles can cause receding gums, leading to tooth sensitivity and root exposure.

3. Remember to also brush your **tongue**. Think of the tongue as a "shag" carpet, collecting germs and bacteria. Brushing the tongue does wonders for keeping your breath fresh, too.

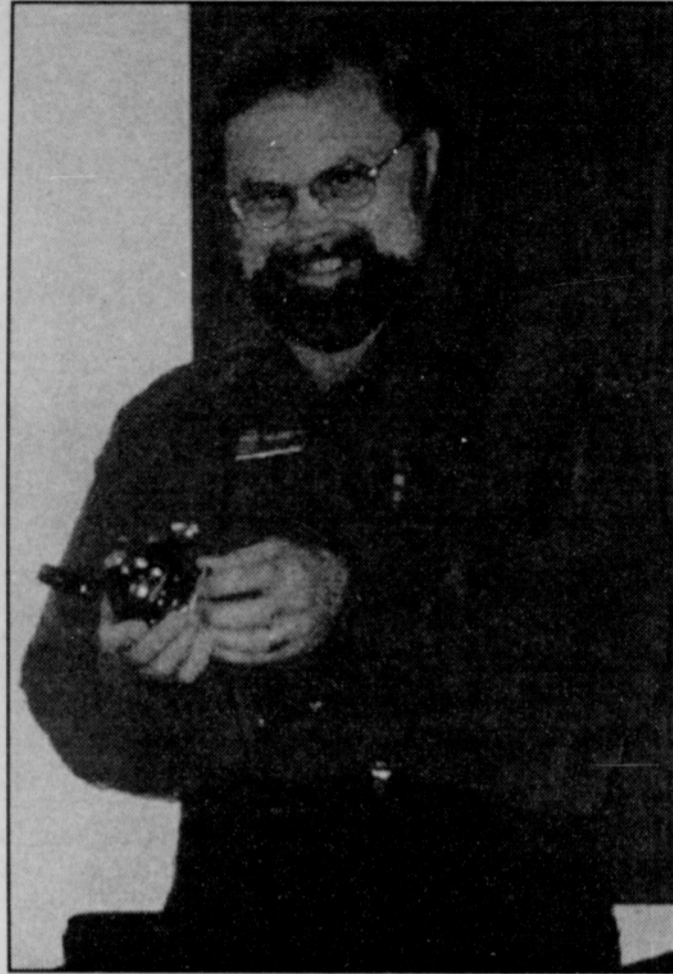
4. **Do** replace your toothbrush every three or four months. A worn toothbrush can't do the job a new one can, and an old brush can injure the gums.

5. **Don't scrub!** Better to brush using small circles. Remember you are using a **toothbrush**, not a **scrub brush!**

6. Brush your teeth at least **twice** per day. The most important time is before going to bed. Don't let all that bacteria stay on your teeth all night long, feasting on teeth and gums.

7. Always use toothpaste with fluoride. Children should use a small, pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste after every meal and at bedtime.

Toothbrushing does not have to be boring. A few minutes twice daily can do wonders at keeping your teeth healthy and free from tooth decay and gum disease. Remember to floss as well as brush each day, too. "You only floss the teeth you want to keep."



Dr. Fred Scriver gets a reel for his fishing vacation. He resigned from the Siletz Community Health Clinic to return to Alaska for summer fishing.

Information on the Freshstart Program

by Danelle Zosel-Sanderson

The American Cancer Society's *freshstart* program is designed to help participants stop smoking by providing them with all of the essential information and strategies needed to direct their efforts at stopping.

The *freshstart* program consists of four one-hour group sessions that take place twice weekly over a two-week period. *Freshstart* contains all of the elements that have been found to be meaningful in helping smokers stop smoking and stay off cigarettes.

The program addresses smokers' behaviors, thoughts, and feelings. If you or anyone you know is interested in the *freshstart* program, please contact the CHA in your area or Danelle Zosel-Sanderson at the Siletz Community Health Clinic.

Kids Benefit from Fitness Activities

Many children in the United States are physically unfit. The problem is getting worse because of too much TV watching and computer game playing, and fewer physical education classes in school. A poor diet only makes the problem worse.

Physically unfit children can become unhealthy adults. Physically fit kids:

- ◆ Sleep better
- ◆ Are happier
- ◆ Get well faster when sick
- ◆ Have better posture
- ◆ Have more endurance and better concentration
- ◆ Keep fat off (are thinner)
- ◆ Have better coordination and balance
- ◆ Perform better in school
- ◆ Have high self-esteem

By age 5, physical activity should be part of a child's daily routine. If a child eats right and exercises a lot, he or she may never have to worry about getting too fat. Exercise burns off calories and sensible eating controls calories eaten. Fit parents are good role models. Limit TV watching, exercise daily, and serve healthy foods.

Set family exercise levels to the least fit member of the family. Exercise should be fun for kids. The goal should be to get a total of at least 30 minutes of physical activity every day.

Plan family games such as plastic horseshoes, frisbee, softball, tug-of-war, nerf football, kickball, soccer, jump rope, hoola hoop, and tag games. Turn on music and exercise or dance. Plan vacations around exercise such as canoeing, hiking, and biking. Make household chores a family exercise time: rake leaves, shovel snow, or clean house. If kids get bored or tired, ease up and switch activities. The key to a fitness lifestyle change is to make it fun and do it as an entire family. When children are older, they will exercise regularly on their own.

Active children need to drink lots of fluids (water is best) before and after exercise. And they need plenty of healthy foods to give them the energy and nutrients needed for active play.