

# Let's brush our teeth together

## – till the age of 10!

It is very important that children learn that they feel good with clean and healthy teeth. Brush at least twice daily, in the morning and last thing at night.

### When should you start brushing children's teeth?

When a child's first tooth becomes visible.

### How often should you brush your children's teeth?

At least twice daily for two minutes at a time. Teeth need to be thoroughly cleaned before bedtime.

### At what age can children start taking care of their own oral hygiene?

Children under the age of 10 require assistance with brushing their teeth and some need assistance with using dental floss even longer.

### What type of toothpaste is most suitable?

Toothpaste with a mild taste and between 1000-1500 ppm fluoride content (refer to product description on packaging). Children's toothpaste with fluoride content less than 1000 ppm should not be used.

### The recommended amount of fluoride toothpaste and fluoride concentration (ppm F) depends on the child's age. Amount of toothpaste equal to:

- ¼ of the child's pinky fingernail for a child under the age of 3 (1000-1350 ppm F).
- The size of the child's pinky fingernail for a child at the age of 3-5 (1000-1350 ppm F).
- 1 cm for 6-year-olds and older (1350-1500 ppm F).



### What type of toothbrush to use?

A toothbrush should have dense, soft bristles on a small head with a handle that fits the hand of an adult.

### Dental floss

We only brush three out of the five sides of our teeth. The two sides between children's teeth must be cleaned with dental floss once per day.

### What is the best way to brush teeth?

- Keep the youngest children in a confined lying position, e.g. on a baby changing table or in a parent's arms.
- Give yourself adequate time – at least 2 minutes.
- Brush with small massaging motions, back and forth, on the front and the back of the teeth.
- Make sure to brush in between the cusps of each tooth.
- Do not rinse the toothpaste off the teeth, only spit it out – so that the fluoride works for a longer period of time.
- Rinse the toothbrush and let it dry.
- Replace your toothbrush once its bristles have become bent and split.

Videos demonstrating children's tooth brushing can be found on the Directorate of Health's website: