

Brush twice a day – once before you go to sleep



Use fluoride toothpaste



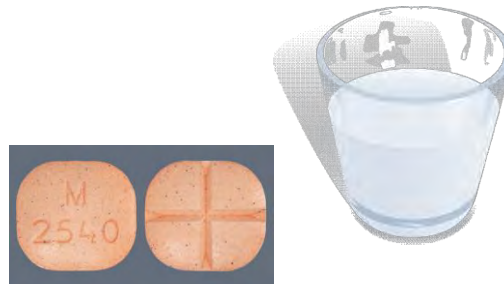
Do not rinse your mouth out after brushing



Sugar and alcohol have a bad effect on your mouth and teeth. Try and **limit sugar damage** by cutting down the amount of sugar you drink and eat.



If taking medications containing sugar (like Methadone), **rinse your mouth or apply fluoride toothpaste** before taking



If you are keen to **give up smoking** there is support available



Attend dental appointments

WHEN TO SEE A DENTIST

If you want to protect your teeth from disease, visit a dentist for a check-up, even if you have no pains or worries about your teeth.

Find a dentist who delivers NHS services, you may find a service that specialises in working with people who are homeless in your area. You may be exempt from paying NHS charges and so receive free treatment. To find out ask your nurse, pharmacist or support worker for the [HC11 Form](#) or download a copy online.

If your family declared homeless and you have been housed, find your community dental service so that your children can get seen by a dentist.

Being anxious is normal

- Many people experience worries and fears about visiting the dentist.
- Dentists are trained to treat people who are anxious.
- The dentist will explain what they are doing during the appointment, and how it might feel in your mouth.
- If you tell the dentist you are anxious about seeing them, they will be able to offer you help and reassurance.

An emergency

There may be times you need to see a dentist at short notice. It is important to know when you might need a dentist in an emergency.

Try to see a dentist **immediately** if you notice any of the following problems with your mouth or teeth:

- Severe pain worsened or relieved by hot/cold
- Severe constant pain or pain on biting.
- Swelling of the gums, jaw, face or neck.
- Presence of unexplained ulcer, white patch or lump for more than two weeks.

See [NHS Choices](#) in England

See [NHS 24](#) in Scotland

See [NHS Direct Wales](#) in Wales

See [NI Direct](#) in Northern Ireland

Or ask at the hostel or day centre for more information.

