Most people manage to maintain good oral hygiene with a manual toothbrush if used correctly. Using an electric toothbrush is another option. These are particularly useful for people with poor manual dexterity and they may also improve motivation to brush. Your dental professional can advise on the best type of toothbrush for you.

An electric toothbrush provides the right cleaning action, but it won’t do all the work for you. The effectiveness of any toothbrush depends on the brushing technique of the person using it.

**Steps to brushing ........**

1. Apply a small amount of fluoride toothpaste to the brush. To avoid ‘splashing’, place the brush in the mouth before switching it on.

2. Guide the brush slowly from tooth to tooth, holding the brush head in place for a few seconds before moving on to the next tooth. (Remember, it is not necessary for you to ‘jiggle’ – the brush will do that for you). As you clean, make sure the bristles follow the shape of the teeth and the curve of the gums.

3. To brush behind the upper and lower front teeth, it may be easier to tilt the brush vertically.

4. Brush twice daily for minimum 2 minutes, or as recommended by your dental professional. If your appliance has a built-in timer, use it to ensure you brush for a suitable time.

**Also ........**

Follow manufacturer’s instructions about cleaning and storing your appliance after use. If your toothbrush runs on disposable batteries, be aware that these batteries lose their charge gradually. This means the movement of the brush will become slower and slower, reducing the effectiveness of the cleaning action.

Contact the Dental Health Education Unit for further information on 9313 0604/5 or email dheu@dental.health.wa.gov.au
Alternatively visit www.dental.wa.gov.au
© Dental Health Education Unit 2011