

# T<sup>TOOTH</sup>TH TALK

## What's Lurking Around in Your Toothbrush

Your toothbrush looks innocent sitting on your bathroom sink waiting to be used by you. But before you put it in your mouth, consider this: the average toothbrush contains over a million germs because your mouth is also home to millions of germs.



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So what can we do to help reduce some of the germs in our Toothbrush?

- Store your toothbrush in open air, in an upright position in order for it to dry fully.
- Don't store your toothbrush on the counter close to the toilet. Flushing a toilet propels germs into the air which can land on your nearby toothbrush.
- When storing more than one toothbrush together, don't let the heads touch one another to avoid sharing germs.
- Remember to rinse a brand new toothbrush off before using it because it's not sterile and clean just because it's in a new package.
- Rinse your brush thoroughly with tap water after each use.
- Wash your hands before/after us-

ing • Replace your toothbrush every 3-4 months or sooner if the bristles look worn and frayed with a soft bristled toothbrush.

- Always replace your toothbrush after you have been sick with an infection like cold, flu, or virus.

- Do not share toothbrushes with anyone.

- If you drop your toothbrush on the floor, soak the bristles in hydrogen peroxide or mouthwashes with antibacterial agents.

- There are toothbrush sanitizers on the market. However, I haven't read any data that supports that they provide a specific health benefit.

- I would not recommend you to microwave nor place your toothbrush in the dishwasher for sanitizing, as the heat may damage the brush, doing more harm than good.

Remember the Toothbrush is the 1st defense to fighting tooth decay and gum disease. So let's remember these tips of how to take care of our toothbrush in order to help reduce germs. I hope this Tooth Talk has helped and if you have any additional questions please call my office, Integrity Dental Care, PLLC, (615) 445-8700.