

1. Rank the following in order of importance (A = Most Important, C = Least Important):

- A) The cost of the toothbrush
- B) How long you use the toothbrush for
- C) How you use the toothbrush

Answer: C, B, A

No matter how much you spend on a toothbrush, it is only effective if used correctly. Many TV adverts demonstrate poor brushing techniques. While there is no definitive evidence for an ideal brushing time, power brushes often have built-in two-minute timers, which may explain why they show a slight advantage—encouraging longer brushing sessions. Every Christmas, a “new and improved” brush hits the market, but last year’s cheaper model is usually just as effective if used properly.

2. Which is the best interdental aid for a resident to use? Answer Y (Yes) or N (No):

- A) The one they are used to
- B) The one you think is best
- C) The most expensive option

A) Yes (Y) – It’s difficult to change long-standing habits, but you may encourage the use of a handled interdental brush to reduce the risk of swallowing or choking.

B) No (N) – While you can suggest a better option, there must be a balance between ideal recommendations and what is realistically achievable.

C) No (N) – Expensive options, such as water flossers, are not proven to be as effective as correctly used interdental brushes. However, they are much better than doing nothing. If someone can afford dental implants, water flossers are often recommended, as implants are three times harder to clean than natural teeth.

3. Where can you get reliable advice on brushing technique? (G = Good, P = Poor)

- A) Your dental team
- B) Authorised dental websites
- C) Social media
- D) ChatGPT

A) G – Your dental team can provide personalized advice tailored to your specific needs and abilities.

B) G – Many reputable websites, such as the NHS (UK) and ADA (USA), offer accurate dental advice. Tooth care is universal. YouTube channels like Teeth4Life can also be useful.

C) P – Be cautious. Unless the source is trustworthy, social media can promote misinformation and even harmful techniques.

D) G – AI sources like ChatGPT can provide reliable general dental advice, but it’s always best to confirm with a professional.