



A FREE GUIDE

The Healthy Smile Guide



Simple, honest habits and a smart plan for your teeth — at home and abroad

Keep your teeth for life, spot trouble early, and travel for treatment with confidence.

A free guide from Tooth Care Romania

A quick note before you start: This guide is general information to help you look after your teeth and make good decisions. It is not a diagnosis, and it cannot replace a proper examination. Every mouth is different. Always consult a dentist about your own situation, especially before starting or stopping any treatment.

Why we made this

Most dental problems are slow, quiet, and preventable. By the time something hurts, the cheap and easy fix has usually passed. The good news is that the habits that protect your teeth are simple, and the warning signs that matter are easy to learn.

We put this guide together for two kinds of reader: the person who just wants to keep their own teeth healthy for as long as possible, and the person weighing up treatment abroad and wondering how to prepare. Whether you ever visit us in Bucharest or not, we want you to walk away with something useful. Let's get into it.

1. Daily care that actually matters

You do not need a bathroom full of products. You need a few things done well, every day. Here is what genuinely moves the needle.

Brush for two minutes, twice a day

Two minutes is longer than it feels. Most people brush for about 45 seconds and think they are done. Split your mouth into four sections — upper right, upper left, lower right, lower left — and give each about thirty seconds.

Technique beats effort. Scrubbing hard back and forth does not clean better; it wears down enamel and pushes your gums back over time. Instead:

- Hold the brush at roughly a 45-degree angle to the gumline, where plaque loves to hide.
- Use small, gentle circles or short strokes.

- Cover every surface: the outside, the inside (people always skip the inside of the lower front teeth), and the chewing tops.
- Let the bristles do the work. If you are flattening them, you are pressing too hard.

Replace your brush, or the head on an electric one, every three months, or sooner if the bristles splay out.

Clean between your teeth — this is the half everyone skips

A toothbrush only reaches about three of the five surfaces of each tooth. The two surfaces where teeth touch their neighbours are where cavities and gum disease most often start, and a brush cannot get there. Whatever you use — floss, interdental brushes, or a water flosser — the goal is the same: disturb the plaque between your teeth once a day.

- **Interdental brushes** (small pipe-cleaner-style brushes) are excellent if you have a little space between your teeth, and many people find them easier than floss.
- **Floss** is the classic option for tight contacts. Curve it into a C-shape around each tooth and slide it gently under the gumline, rather than snapping it straight down.
- **Water flossers** are a good alternative if you have bridges, implants, braces, or simply hate floss.

Pick the one you will actually use. The best interdental method is the one that becomes a habit.

Timing: brush before breakfast, and wait after acidic meals

Two small timing tips make a real difference:

- **After something acidic** — fruit juice, citrus, wine, fizzy drinks — your enamel is temporarily softened. Brushing right away can scrub away that softened surface. Wait about 30 to 60 minutes, or rinse with plain water first.
- **In the morning**, brushing *before* breakfast is a reasonable choice: it clears the overnight plaque and coats your teeth with fluoride before you eat. If you prefer to brush after, wait a little while if breakfast was acidic.

Electric or manual?

An electric brush is not magic, but for most people it makes good technique easier. The oscillating or vibrating head does the small movements for you, and many models have a built-in two-minute timer and a pressure sensor that warns you when you press too hard. If you tend to rush or scrub, an electric brush is worth it. That said, a manual brush used properly, for the full two minutes, cleans perfectly well. Technique matters more than the tool.

Toothpaste and fluoride basics

The single most important thing about your toothpaste is that it contains **fluoride**. Fluoride strengthens enamel and helps reverse the earliest stages of decay before a cavity forms. A few practical points:

- For most adults, a standard fluoride toothpaste is all you need.
 - **Spit, don't rinse.** After brushing, spit out the excess but skip the big water rinse. Rinsing washes away the concentrated fluoride and cuts its protective effect. A small habit, a real benefit.
 - "Whitening" toothpastes mostly remove surface stains with mild abrasives; they do not change the natural colour of your teeth. Avoid anything marketed as heavily abrasive for daily use.
 - Sensitive teeth? A toothpaste made for sensitivity, used consistently, often helps within a couple of weeks.
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2. Eat and drink for stronger teeth

Food affects your teeth in two ways: what it is made of, and how often you have it. Frequency matters more than most people realise. Sipping a sugary drink over an hour is far worse than drinking it in one go, because every sip restarts the acid attack on your enamel.

What helps

- **Water**, especially if it is fluoridated. It rinses away food, keeps saliva flowing, and adds nothing harmful.
- **Cheese, plain yoghurt and milk** — rich in calcium, and cheese even helps neutralise acid after a meal.
- **Crunchy vegetables and fruit** like carrots, celery and apples, which get saliva going and gently clean as you chew.
- **Leafy greens, nuts and lean protein**, which supply the minerals your teeth and jawbone rely on.
- **Saliva itself** is your mouth's natural defence. Staying hydrated and chewing sugar-free gum after meals both help it do its job.

What erodes and decays

- **Sugar** feeds the bacteria that produce enamel-dissolving acid. The total amount matters, but the *frequency* matters more.
- **Acidic drinks** — fizzy drinks (including sugar-free ones), fruit juices, sports and energy drinks, and even sparkling water in large amounts — soften enamel directly. Drinking through a straw and having them with meals rather than sipping all day both help.
- **Constant snacking** keeps your mouth in a permanent low-level acid state, with no time to recover between attacks.
- **Sticky sweets and dried fruit** cling to teeth and prolong the exposure.

No need for a fad diet or a list of forbidden foods. The honest, boring truth works: enjoy sweet and acidic things with meals rather than grazing on them, drink water in between, and give your mouth long

stretches of calm to recover.

3. Ten warning signs you should not ignore

Your mouth usually warns you before a small problem becomes a big one. Here are ten signs worth acting on — what you might notice, what it may mean, and how quickly to deal with it.

- 1. Bleeding gums when you brush or floss** *What it may mean:* Usually early gum inflammation (gingivitis) from plaque — reversible, but a real warning. *How urgent:* Soon. Improve your cleaning; if it continues beyond two weeks, see a dentist.
- 2. Persistent bad breath or a bad taste** *What it may mean:* Trapped plaque, gum disease, or an infected tooth. *How urgent:* Non-urgent but worth a check-up if it lingers despite good cleaning.
- 3. Tooth sensitivity to hot, cold or sweet** *What it may mean:* Exposed roots, worn enamel, a small cavity, or a cracked filling. *How urgent:* Book a check-up. Sudden, severe sensitivity should be seen sooner.
- 4. A lasting ache or throbbing in a tooth** *What it may mean:* Decay reaching the nerve, or an infection developing. *How urgent:* Prompt. Ongoing pain rarely fixes itself and often gets more expensive to treat the longer you wait.
- 5. Swelling in the gum, face or jaw** *What it may mean:* A possible abscess or spreading infection. *How urgent:* Urgent. Facial swelling, especially with fever or difficulty swallowing, needs same-day care.
- 6. A loose adult tooth** *What it may mean:* Advanced gum disease, injury, or bone loss around the tooth. *How urgent:* Prompt. Early action can sometimes save the tooth.
- 7. Receding gums or teeth "looking longer"** *What it may mean:* Gum recession from hard brushing, grinding, or gum disease. *How urgent:* Book a check-up to find the cause before it progresses.
- 8. Jaw pain, clicking, or waking with headaches** *What it may mean:* Teeth grinding or a jaw-joint issue. *How urgent:* Non-urgent, but mention it early — a simple night guard can prevent years of wear.
- 9. A sore, ulcer or patch that does not heal in two to three weeks** *What it may mean:* Most are harmless, but a mouth sore that will not heal should always be examined. *How urgent:* Get it checked promptly. Do not wait and hope.
- 10. A chipped, cracked tooth or lost filling — even without pain** *What it may mean:* An open door for decay and bacteria, and a crack that can spread. *How urgent:* Book soon. Repairing early is simpler and cheaper than waiting for it to hurt.

A repair that costs a little today often prevents a much bigger, costlier treatment tomorrow. When in doubt, get it looked at.

4. The dental tourist's preparation checklist

If you are considering treatment abroad, good preparation makes everything smoother, safer, and usually cheaper. Print this page and tick as you go.

Before you contact any clinic

- ☐ Get a recent **panoramic X-ray (OPG)** if you can — it shows all your teeth and jawbone in one image and lets a clinic plan properly from a distance.
- ☐ Save any **CT scans or smaller X-rays** you already have.
- ☐ Take a few clear **photos of your teeth** (front view, and any specific problem area) in good light.
- ☐ Write a short note about **what is bothering you** and what you would like to change.

Your medical history

- ☐ List any **medical conditions** (diabetes, heart conditions, osteoporosis, and so on).
- ☐ List all **medicines you take**, including supplements — some affect dental treatment and healing.
- ☐ Note any **blood thinners**, as these matter for extractions and surgery.
- ☐ Note any **allergies**, especially to medicines, latex or metals.
- ☐ Note any **past dental work** and how you got on with it (anaesthetic, anxiety, complications).

Questions to ask any clinic (quality signals to listen for)

- ☐ **Sterilisation:** How are instruments sterilised? Do they follow strict, modern protocols?
- ☐ **Materials:** Which implant systems, crowns and materials do they use? Are they recognised international brands?
- ☐ **Warranty:** Is there a guarantee on implants, crowns and other work — what does it cover, and for how long?
- ☐ **The plan and the price:** Will you get a **written treatment plan and estimate** before you commit?
- ☐ **Aftercare:** What happens if there is a problem after you fly home? Can they be reached, and can a return visit be arranged?
- ☐ **Language:** Can the team communicate clearly in a language you speak?
- ☐ **Timing:** How many visits and how many days will your treatment realistically take?

Packing and practical

- ☐ Your **ID or passport**, and your EHIC/GHIC card if you have one.

- ☐ Copies of your **X-rays, scans and medicine list** (on your phone is fine).
- ☐ A supply of any **regular medication** for the whole trip.
- ☐ **Comfortable clothes** and some soft foods or snacks for after treatment.
- ☐ A little **free time** built into the trip for rest — and to enjoy the city.

Timing your trip

- ☐ Send your X-ray and get your plan **before** booking flights, so you know how many days and visits you need.
 - ☐ For **implants**, expect that treatment may be split across two trips with a healing period in between.
 - ☐ Leave a **buffer** — avoid flying home just hours after a bigger procedure.
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5. After treatment: general aftercare basics

Every case is different, and your dentist's specific instructions always come first. The notes below are general guidance to help you know what to expect.

After an extraction or oral surgery

- Bite gently on the gauze pad to help a clot form, and change it as advised.
- **Do not** rinse hard, spit forcefully, or use a straw for the first day — the suction can dislodge the clot.
- Avoid smoking, which slows healing considerably.
- Stick to soft, cool foods for the first day or two and chew on the other side.
- Some swelling and mild discomfort is normal; a cold compress and standard pain relief usually manage it.
- Contact your dentist if bleeding is heavy and will not settle, or if pain worsens after a few days rather than easing.

After dental implants

- Follow your aftercare instructions closely — the first days matter for healing.
- Keep the area clean but gentle, exactly as your dentist directs.
- Eat soft foods at first and avoid biting directly on the site.
- Implants heal into the bone over a period of months; the final teeth are fitted once that has happened.
- Report unusual pain, swelling, or a loose feeling rather than waiting.

After whitening

- Teeth can be temporarily sensitive; a sensitivity toothpaste helps.
 - For the first day or two, avoid strongly coloured foods and drinks — coffee, red wine, tea, curries — while the enamel is more absorbent.
 - Whitening fades gradually; good daily care and cutting back on staining drinks makes it last.
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6. Myth-busting: six things people get wrong

Myth: "If it doesn't hurt, nothing is wrong." Most decay and gum disease are painless until they are advanced. Regular check-ups catch problems while they are still small.

Myth: "Bleeding gums mean I should brush them less." The opposite. Bleeding is usually a sign of inflammation from plaque. Gentle, consistent brushing and cleaning between the teeth is how you calm it down.

Myth: "Harder brushing cleans better." Hard brushing wears away enamel and pushes gums back. Gentle and thorough beats hard and fast every time.

Myth: "Sugar-free fizzy drinks are safe for teeth." They may skip the sugar, but they are still acidic and can erode enamel. Water is the friend of your teeth.

Myth: "Cheaper dental care abroad must mean lower quality." Not necessarily. Lower prices in a country like Romania come mainly from lower operating costs, not shortcuts — the same implant systems, crowns and digital imaging used across Western Europe are used here too. Quality depends on the clinic, so ask the questions in the checklist above.

Myth: "Baby teeth don't matter — they fall out anyway." Baby teeth guide the adult teeth into place and affect a child's eating and speech. Decay in them can be painful and can harm the adult teeth forming underneath.

7. When you fly home

Treatment abroad works best when the follow-up is just as planned as the trip. A few simple habits keep you on track.

The follow-up rhythm

- **The first days:** rest, follow your aftercare instructions to the letter, and keep the clinic's contact details handy.
- **The first weeks:** ease back into normal eating as advised, and keep the treated area especially clean.

- **Longer term:** keep up your routine check-ups and cleanings with a local dentist. Ongoing care protects the work you have had done.

Who to call if something feels wrong

- For **routine questions** about healing or aftercare, contact the clinic that treated you — they know your case.
- For anything **sudden and severe** — significant swelling, heavy bleeding that will not stop, high fever, or difficulty swallowing or breathing — seek **urgent local medical care straight away**. Do not wait to reach the clinic abroad first.
- Keep your **treatment plan, receipts and any warranty details** somewhere easy to find. If a local dentist ever needs to help, this information makes it far easier.

At Tooth Care Romania, your care does not end when you fly home. Before you leave, the dentist gives you clear aftercare instructions, and we stay reachable for questions once you are back. For anything that needs hands-on attention, a return visit can be arranged.

About Tooth Care Romania

Tooth Care Romania helps international patients fix their teeth in Bucharest and enjoy the trip while they are here. We work with modern clinics and specialist doctors who use up-to-date technology for treatments that look good and last. Romania holds high standards in dentistry, and prices sit well below what you would pay in Western Europe — dental tourists typically save 50–70% compared with prices at home.

What you can count on:

- **Multilingual staff**, so you can explain your case in your own words.
- **Modern partner clinics** with digital imaging, an in-house dental laboratory, and strict sterilisation protocols.
- **Personalised care** — consultation, treatment plan and aftercare arranged around your needs, not a template.
- **One point of contact** who coordinates the medical side and the trip, so you are not juggling both.

You are not choosing between quality and price. You get both.

Send us your X-ray for a free treatment plan

Upload a panoramic X-ray or recent dental images and we will send back a clear plan and estimate — no cost, no obligation. Prefer to talk first? That works too.

Get your free treatment plan → www.toothcareromania.com

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