



PRESS RELEASE

Interdental Brushes or Floss Answers the Sacramento Dentistry Group

Sacramento, CA — February 9, 2018 — Patients often ask whether they should use [dental floss or interdental brushes](#) for oral hygiene. The problem with this question is that these two different tools are not mutually exclusive — if a person uses one, they can still use the other. For the best oral health, [the dentists](#) at the Sacramento Dentistry Group recommend that their patients use both, as needed and according to their preferences.

Looking at the Research

First, a study presented by the respected Cochrane Review concluded that interdental brushes and dental floss produce very similar results, when used in conjunction with toothbrushes, for cleaning the teeth. They are essentially equally effective at preventing [gum disease](#). Unfortunately, none of the studies considered researched the effect of using both interdental brushes and dental floss. From the perspective of the practicing dentist or [dental hygienist](#), this is the ideal practice.

Whether they start with floss and end with brushes, or vice versa, patients usually find that each tool manages to collect plaque and food from between the teeth. In effect, each method has its own advantages. Therefore, a review of what they can and cannot do is helpful.

An interdental brush is very effective at cleaning the gaps between the teeth. If used carefully, so the gum tissue is not punctured, nor the enamel rubbed down, they usually do a better job at cleaning this area of the mouth. For those with very tightly spaced teeth, however, interdental brushes may not even be an option. Finally, one Dutch study found that rubber interdental brushes do a better job of preventing symptoms of gum disease than brushes with ordinary bristles.

Dental floss has the hygiene advantage in the area where each tooth touches its neighbor, and also immediately below the gumline. These are spots where interdental brushes simply can't reach. In addition, behind the last molar is a place where no interdental brush can go — without dental floss, this spot would never get cleaned. So while many patients prefer the interdental brush, it simply cannot reach all the areas that need attention.

To get the best results, a patient should use both tools at least once a day. If a person has a strong preference, however, the most important thing is to include flossing, with the tool of personal choice, as a part of daily oral hygiene. For more information, visit the [website](#) of the Sacramento Dentistry Group.