United Concordia - Newsroom

HARRISBURG, Pa. (March 24, 2020) – During the COVID-19 outbreak, it's more important than ever to pay attention to toothbrush hygiene, says United Concordia Dental.

"Your toothbrush is an ideal breeding ground for germs and bacteria," said Quinn Dufurrena, D.D.S., J.D., chief dental officer for United Concordia Dental. "At times like these, it is critical to follow best practices to keep those germs from spreading."

These practices include:

- **Wash your hands before you brush or floss.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends washing for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, or using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
- **Don't contaminate the toothpaste.** Squeeze toothpaste on to a Q-tip or a piece of wax paper, and then apply it to the bristles. If you share a tube of toothpaste with someone else, do not touch the brush with the tip of the tube.
- **Clean your toothbrush.** After using your toothbrush, wipe the handle with a safe household disinfectant. The CDC recommends using a diluted household bleach solution, alcohol solutions (with at least 70% alcohol) and most common EPA-registered household disinfectants. According to the National Institutes of Health, the coronavirus can live for two to three days on plastic surfaces like a toothbrush, even after it's been rinsed clean.
- **Never share a toothbrush.** Adults understand this, but children can sometimes use the wrong brush by mistake. One strategy to avoid this is color-coding the family's toothbrushes.

If you think you've been exposed to COVID-19, you need to be even more diligent, Dufurrena said. "When you're sick, your toothbrush needs to practice social distancing too," he said. "Isolate your brush from everyone else's in your household and replace it after you get better."

Dufurrena noted that the American Dental Association recommends replacing toothbrushes, or heads on electric toothbrushes, every three or four months – sooner if the bristles are worn down.

For more information on toothbrush hygiene during COVID-19, visit United Concordia'sDental Health Center.

For further information: Walt Cherniak, United Concordia Dental, 410-292-8479, walter.cherniak@ucci.com; Leilyn Perri, Highmark Health, 717-302-4243, leilyn.perri@highmarkhealth.org

---

https://news.unitedconcordia.com/2020-03-24-United-Concordia-Dental-Offers-Toothbrush-Hygiene-Tips-During-COVID-19