DIY Ways to Prevent Gum Disease

Oral Irrigation and Rinses for Increased Bacteria Control There has been increasing research evidence that the Waterpik can be a useful home care adjunct to **control oral bacteria levels when treating or maintaining gum disease.**

Household 3% Hydrogen Peroxide: To use in a Waterpik, fill the Waterpik reservoir with water as instructed. Add 2-3 caps of hydrogen peroxide into the reservoir. To make an oral rinse for swishing, add hydrogen peroxide to taste to ½ to 1 cup of water. Swish for 60 seconds once or twice daily.

Grapefruit Seed Extract is a Natural Alternative for use in the Waterpik: Fill the Waterpik reservoir with water as instructed. Add 10 drops of grapefruit seed extract into the 20 oz. reservoir. To make an oral rinse, add 5 drops of grapefruit seed extract to 2 cups of water. Swish for 60 seconds twice daily. Xylitol sweetener can be added to taste as the GSE is extremely bitter. To make an oral rinse, use the same recipes for the Waterpik reservoir above. Swish for 60 seconds twice daily.

Oil Pulling: **Useful for prevention** and best done first thing in the morning before brushing. Use 1-2 tbs. organic oil. Coconut oil is a good choice for its anti-microbial properties and flavor. 1 drop of organic oil of oregano can be added for its natural antibiotic properties. However oregano oil is axtremely strong and bitter. Other oils may be added for additional health benefits, like myrrh to tonify the gums. Another excellent essential oil for oral health is tea tree oil (melaleuca) because it creates a surface where plaque is less likely to adhere.

If adding essential oils, be sure to use a carrier oil. Alternative oils are organic sesame oil or organice sunflower oil. Swish through teeth for at least 3-5 minutes. Do not swallow. The oil will mix with the saliva in your mouth and the enzymes within the saliva until it is watery. Spit into a cup or other receptacle, not the sink or toilet as the oil will start to build up and clog the drain. Rinse and gargle with warm salt water or mouthwash. Spit out completely.

Please be advised that the company that makes your oral irrigator will not honor the warranty if anything other than plain water is used in the machine.

Anxiety keeping you away from the dentist? See "A is for Anxiety" on main page

Prevention is always better than a cure! Have regular checkups and cleanings.

See also: Do I Really Need Root Planing?