

Dental diseases

The two most common oral diseases are tooth decay (dental caries) and gum disease (periodontal disease). Both are caused by the accumulation of plaque bacteria on the teeth and gums. Plaque bacteria is colourless and difficult to see, until it builds up to form a thick layer, and requires regular removal to avoid dental problems.

Dental decay is the result of frequent consumption of sugars, mainly in confectionary, snack foods and soft drinks. The bacterial plaque on the teeth use these sugars to produce acids that attack and damage the tooth surfaces resulting in decay and cavities. The more frequently sugars are consumed the more often the teeth come under acid attack which increases the risk of dental decay.

Plaque bacteria is also responsible for gingivitis (periodontal disease) when it accumulates around the necks of the teeth and between the teeth. This is due to inadequate or poor brushing. In this case the plaque bacteria produces toxins which attack gum tissues resulting in inflamed and bleeding gums.

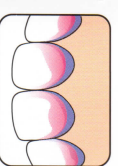


Periodontal disease can eventually destroy the bone holding the teeth in place causing them to become progressively loose and painful. Unlike tooth decay which is usually quite rapid, periodontitis may take many years to reach the stage where teeth are lost. This is the most common cause of tooth loss in adults.

Why disclose plaque?

Plaque is difficult to see especially when it is between or on the inside of the teeth or at the back of the mouth. Disclosing products are useful for showing where plaque has accumulated and where brushing needs to be directed.

Although there are a number of products available, PlaqSearch is a more advanced range as it not only shows where the plaque is but also identifies the difference between the old and newer plaque. This is important as the older plaque can be more harmful. PlaqSearch indicates newer plaque as red and older plaque as blue. Once stained the plaque can then be brushed away which helps improve the brushing technique by identifying where the problem areas are.



Red shows new plaque and blue shows plaque older than 12 hours.

What is a plaque disclosing agent?

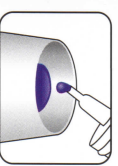
Plaque disclosing agents contain special dyes that make it easy to see plaque.

How do I use them?

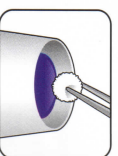
Disclosing agents are generally available in two forms to suit different users.

Tablets: Chew a tablet and then lick the solution around the surfaces of the teeth before rinsing out.

Disclosing solution: Paint a small amount onto the teeth with a cotton wool bud or small brush. Rinse out excess.



Drip the solution into a dappen dish.



Dip a cotton pellet in the solution and apply on the tooth surfaces.



Are they suitable for children?

Yes, they are formulated with children in mind, although we recommend children under 12 year should be supervised to minimise potential mess. Children will be motivated to remove the stained plaque from their teeth. They usually respond particularly well to the challenge of the "before and after" disclosing session - where they disclose, brush, then disclose again, to see how well they have brushed!

When a child is able to spit out - usually about 5 years - disclosing should be encouraged to help develop a regular and effective brushing technique.

Unlike other products PlaqSearch doesn't contain sugar or erythrosine. They are also gluten free and suitable for vegetarians.

What if the disclosing agent is swallowed, is it harmful?

No. Only children that are able to spit and rinse out should be encouraged to use disclosing agents. However, as PlaqSearch contains simple food dyes, it will simply pass through the system harmlessly although urine maybe temporarily coloured.

How do I remove the disclosing solution from my teeth?

Simply brush the stain off with your normal toothbrush using a gentle scrubbing technique. Ask your dental professional to show you how. Remember that teeth have five surfaces so make sure that all are cleaned. You may need to use special cleaning aids such as interdental brushes or floss to clean between the teeth and to remove the stain.

Will it stain the rest of my mouth?

Your gums, tongue and lips will pick up some staining. To minimise the effect, rinse out thoroughly after disclosing and try to avoid licking your lips. You can also gently brush your tongue. The staining is temporary and will wear off in a few hours.

Will it stain my implant/crown/bridge?

Some materials used to make or fix orthodontic appliances to the teeth can stain and so you should ask your dental care professional's advice before disclosing. However, for crowns, bridges and implants, the disclosing agent will only stain the plaque found on the appliance and will not stain your dental work.

Can I use disclosing agents with my orthodontic appliance?

Generally yes, but if the brackets and bands are plastic they can pick up the staining – check with your orthodontist first.

Where can I buy PlaqSearch?

Dental practices and selected pharmacies.



We care for healthy smiles

TePe has been promoting healthy smiles since 1965. At our headquarters in Malmö, Sweden, we design and produce interdental brushes, toothbrushes and other oral hygiene products that are available in more than 60 countries worldwide. All TePe products are developed in collaboration with dental expertise.

For more information: Search TePe UK

TePe Oral Hygiene Products Ltd.

Eklund House, 6 Cathedral Avenue, Wells, Somerset, BA5 1FD
Telephone: 01749 608 800, Email: info@tepe.co.uk
www.tepe.co.uk

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