



03 August 2016

## **Denplan's response to the recent debate on the benefits of flossing**

Following the recent announcement that the US government is withdrawing its recommendation to floss from its dietary guidelines, based on the lack of definitive scientific studies to prove its effectiveness on gum disease and tooth decay, Denplan has shared its response.

“When talking about evidence and studies, it’s important to distinguish between the terms ‘flossing’ and ‘cleaning between teeth,’” says Henry Clover, Chief Dental Officer at Denplan. “Floss, whether it’s tape or string, is only one of the methods to clean between teeth and some studies have shown that traditional floss is not always effective for some people. This is partly due to patients not always being able to use the floss correctly and the fact that a thin piece of floss might only remove a proportion of plaque and food particles between teeth. There is, however, strong evidence\* to show that other methods of cleaning between teeth, such as interdental brushes, are highly effective in removing plaque and helping to prevent or treat gum disease.

“Tooth brushing only reaches around 70 percent of tooth surfaces, so if you’re not regularly removing plaque from in between your teeth, there will be bacteria building up and potentially causing problems. This includes an increased risk of gum disease, tooth decay and bad breath.

“It’s vitally important that patients don’t misinterpret the US government’s recent withdrawal of the recommendation to floss as a message that they only need to brush their teeth, and never clean in between them. We would strongly urge patients to follow an evidence-based approach continue to clean between their teeth, as advised by their dental team, using whatever method work best for them, be it floss, interdental brushes or waterpiks.”

**-ends-**

\*Sources: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19820738>  
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19138177>



## Notes to editors

### About Henry Clover

Henry Clover joined the Professional Services team of Denplan in 1998, having worked as a dentist for 17 years looking after patients' oral health in his own practice. He now holds the position of Director of Dental Policy at Simplyhealth and is also Chief Dental Officer at Denplan. Henry playing a vital role in Simplyhealth's Leadership Team and is at the forefront of private dentistry liaising with more than 6,500 member dentists.

### About Denplan

Denplan is the UK's leading dental payment plan specialist, with more than 6,500 member dentists nationwide caring for approximately 1.7 million registered patients. Established in 1986 by two dentists who pioneered the concept of dental payment plans, Denplan has been at the heart of dental care for nearly 30 years and today the company is owned by Simplyhealth. Denplan has a wide range of dental plans for adults and children, enabling patients to budget for their private dental care by spreading the cost through a fixed monthly fee. We support regular attendance and preventive care, reducing the need for clinical intervention and helping patients to maintain healthy teeth and gums for life.

For further information visit [www.denplan.co.uk](http://www.denplan.co.uk). For oral health tips and advice visit [www.myteeth.co.uk](http://www.myteeth.co.uk).  
Patient enquiries telephone: 0800 401 402 Dentist enquiries telephone: 0800 328 3223

- Denplan Care: all routine and restorative care + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Denplan Essentials: routine care only + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Plans for Children: routine and other agreed care + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Membership Plan: registered with the dentist + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Denplan Emergency: worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover only
- Company Dental Plans: company funded, voluntary and flexible benefit schemes

Denplan also provides a range of professional services for its member dentists and their practice teams, including the Denplan Quality Programme, Denplan Excel Accreditation Programme and Denplan Training, plus regulatory advice, business and marketing consultancy services and networking opportunities.

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### About Simplyhealth

Since 1872 – long before the existence of the NHS – we've been helping people to make the most of life, by managing their everyday health needs. We ensure 3.5 million people in the UK have access to health products, services and support they need, when they need them and at a price they can afford.

We're proud to be the leading provider of health cash plans, dental payment and pet health plans. Whereas once we were known purely for cash plans, we now offer a wide range of products and services to cater for peoples' everyday health needs – now and into the future.

Helping people make the most of life is our sole purpose and giving back is a huge part of that. In 2015 we were able to donate £1.6 million to charitable causes, touching the lives of nearly 825,000 people across the UK. Our future success and performance will enable us to deliver our ongoing pledge to donate 10% of our profits to charity each year.

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