







# Products for cleaning oral soft tissues

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- Cleaning teeth and soft tissues of the mouth is essential for oral hygiene and forms part of fundamental personal care
- For optimal cleaning of natural teeth, a small headed medium texture toothbrush should be used with fluoride toothpaste.
- Where there is limited access to the mouth, or soft tissues are tender, a small softer toothbrush such as a baby brush may be helpful
- A number of products are available for cleansing soft tissues of the mouth and may be helpful when toothbrushing is uncomfortable or cannot be tolerated due to tender or delicate tissues
- As per the Scottish Government letter of 30<sup>th</sup> July 2025 oral swabs with a foam head **SHOULD NOT BE USED** due to the risk of the head detaching [Oral Swabs – Essential Information – Scottish Dental](#)
- Suitable products for cleaning oral soft tissues are presented in the table below:

Product	Image	Cleaning teeth	Cleansing soft tissues	Moistening soft tissues	Re-useable ?	Additional information
360° Toothbrush		✓	✓	✓	<p>Single <b>patient</b> use</p> <p>Reuseable for up to 3 months.</p> <p>Change if head show signs of wear</p> <p>Discard if head rotates</p>	<p>Can use to apply moisturising mouth gel and hold fluid to help with hydration of tissues.</p> <p>Can be used to clean teeth if standard brush cannot be tolerated</p>
Special Care toothbrush		✓	✓	possibly	<p>Single <b>patient</b> use</p> <p>Reuseable for up to 3 months or until bristles splayed</p>	<p>Ultra-soft toothbrush.</p> <p>Helpful for patients with sore or delicate tissues.</p> <p>The neck can be angled in hot water for better access.</p>
Silk filament toothbrush		✓	✓	possibly	<p>Single <b>patient</b> use</p> <p>Reuseable for up to 3 months or until bristles splayed</p>	<p>Ideal for sensitive mouths, and sore or delicate tissues</p> <p>Silk is softer than nylon toothbrushes.</p>
Damp, non-fraying gauze on gloved finger			✓	✓	<p>Single use</p> <p>Discard after use</p>	<p>Well established method for cleaning soft tissues, especially where no natural teeth</p> <p>Risk assessment required where natural teeth present if potential for biting</p>
MC3 Mouth Cleanser		✓	✓		<p>Single <b>patient</b> use</p> <p>Reuseable for up to 12 hours</p> <p>Wash under running water and air dry between use</p>	<p>Silicone head</p> <p>By applying a rotating action, the MC3 can collect debris as it cleans.</p>
MC6 Mouth Lip Hydrator				✓	<p>Single <b>patient</b> use</p> <p>Reuseable for up to 24 hours</p>	<p>Reservoir of water with two drip holes to allow gentle flow of water to assist with moisturising patient's lip/mouth or tongue</p>

- In the case of dry mouth, oral care can be supplemented with frequent sips of water to help to relieve symptoms and moisten the tissues.  
**Extra care should be taken in patients with a swallowing difficulties.**

## **Storage of reusable items**

- Products in the above list which are reuseable, including single patient use, should be stored in the same way as standard toothbrushes
- Rinse the product after use under running water and remove any visible debris. Store the product upright eg in a cup or toothbrush holder and allow to air dry.
- Individual holders or storage devices with covers if used should allow for ventilation

## **Further information**

- If you have any queries or require further advice, training or support in delivering oral care contact your local Caring for Smiles team.
- Contact details for your local coordinator can be found here:

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