







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 30th 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		✓	✓	✓	Single patient use Reuseable for up to 3 months. Change if head show signs of wear Discard if head rotates	Can use to apply moisturising mouth gel and hold fluid to help with hydration of tissues. Can be used to clean teeth if standard brush cannot be tolerated
Special Care toothbrush		✓	✓	possibly	Single patient use Reuseable for up to 3 months or until bristles splayed	Ultra-soft toothbrush. Helpful for patients with sore or delicate tissues. The neck can be angled in hot water for better access.
Silk filament toothbrush		✓	✓	possibly	Single patient use Reuseable for up to 3 months or until bristles splayed	Ideal for sensitive mouths, and sore or delicate tissues Silk is softer than nylon toothbrushes.
Damp, non-fraying gauze on gloved finger			✓	✓	Single use Discard after use	Well established method for cleaning soft tissues, especially where no natural teeth Risk assessment required where natural teeth present if potential for biting
MC3 Mouth Cleanser		✓	✓		Single patient use Reuseable for up to 12 hours Wash under running water and air dry between use	Silicone head By applying a rotating action, the MC3 can collect debris as it cleans.
MC6 Mouth Lip Hydrator				✓	Single patient use Reuseable for up to 24 hours	Reservoir of water with two drip holes to allow gentle flow of water to assist with moisturising patient's lip/mouth or tongue

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 difficulty.**



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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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