

# ADA ORAL-B POWER REPORT

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN ORAL-B AND THE  
AUSTRALIAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, MAY 2010



**“Australia’s indifferent attitude towards dental health is not only impacting negatively on the nation’s oral health, but is clearly having a knock on effect when it comes to the future of our children’s dental health.”**

*Dr Phillipa Sawyer*

The **ADA Oral-B Power Report**, jointly commissioned by Oral-B and the Australian Dental Association, puts the spotlight on dental health in Australia. The report gets to the bottom of the state of Australia’s oral health issues by investigating Australians’ sentiments towards oral health, insights into Australia’s oral health care habits and the level of awareness and knowledge around how dental health can affect our overall health.

While most Australians (87%) believe oral health is very important, the report found that the nation’s oral health is marred by widespread complacency and misconceptions about proper brushing habits which is contributing to a significant decline in oral health across Australia.

Oral-B and the ADA have released the report findings to the public in an effort to generate better understanding and awareness of the importance of oral health. Together they are hoping to educate Australians on the key oral health issues and provide valuable advice about how they can put their dental health back on track.



# THE KEY FINDINGS

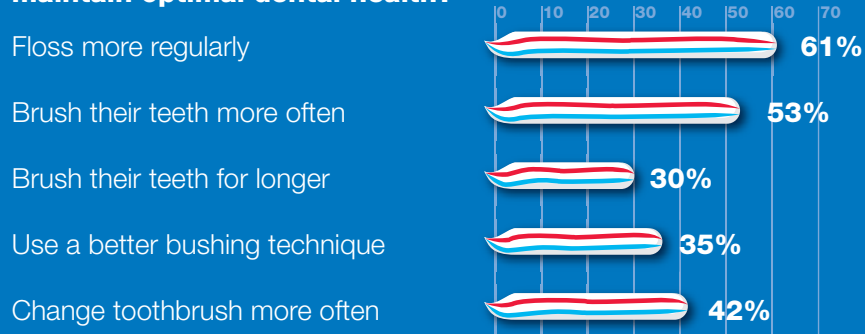
- **The majority of Australians do not visit the dentist despite having serious dental health issues.** In the past 12 months nearly three quarters of Australians (74%) who have experienced tooth ache and a further 87% who experienced red and swollen gums that bleed, all of which are major indicators of poor oral health, failed to bring them to the attention of a dentist. The majority of those suffering prefer to simply grin and bear the pain rather than visit a dentist.
- **Parent's indifferent attitude is putting children's oral health at risk.** The Oral-B ADA Power Report reveals parents can be complacent about their children's oral health by delaying dental visits when problems appear. More than four in ten parents admit they have delayed taking their child to the dentist or don't take them at all with one in ten saying they only take their child to the dentist when a serious problem arises.
- **Australians put dentist visits on hold due to increased living costs.** In the past year, six in ten Australians delayed a trip to the dentist due to financial worries which rose to almost eight in ten in low income households. Most worrying is that while Australians admitted to cutting back on dental visits fewer cut spending on non essential items including alcohol and cigarettes.
- **The majority of Australians believe oral health issues start and finish in the mouth.** Most Australians do not understand the long term health effects that can result from poor oral care. The majority of Australians consider tooth loss and gum disease as the ultimate oral health issues.
- **Only 1 in 3 Australians visit their dentist at least once a year for a check-up.** In low income households this number drops even further to just 18% compared to 39% in well off households. The biggest reason for Australians not visiting the dentist more frequently is cost.
- **7 in 10 Australians admit they could do a better job of looking after their teeth.** The report reveals seven in ten Australians admit they could be doing a better job when it comes to taking care of their teeth. Of these over half said they should be brushing their teeth more often and 61% said they should be flossing more often. Other areas for improvement include changing their toothbrush more frequently (42%) and using a better brushing technique (35%).
- **There are widespread misconceptions about oral health conditions.** While many people are aware of the larger oral health issues that can affect our teeth and gums, more work needs to be done. One in ten thought periodontal disease will go away on its own if you brush regularly with a further 40% unsure.



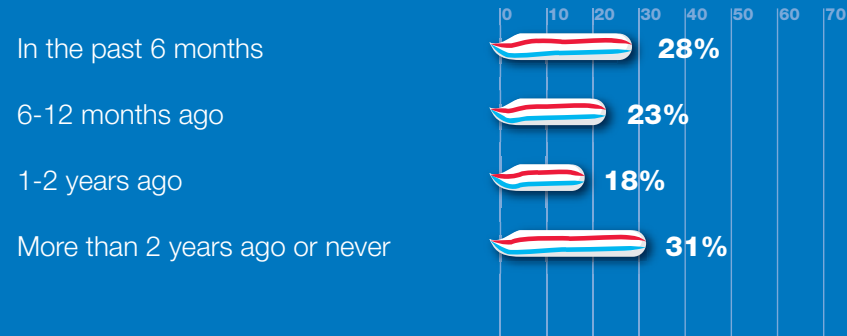
- **Australians look to their dentist for advice but fail to follow through.** Australians say the most common advice given to them by dentists is to floss more regularly (40%) and to use a better brushing technique (28%). However only a quarter admitted they diligently followed the advice given by their dentist.

# THE ADA ORAL-B POWER REPORT REVEALS WHAT AUSTRALIANS THEMSELVES THINK THEY NEED TO DO TO PUT THEIR DENTAL HEALTH BACK ON TRACK

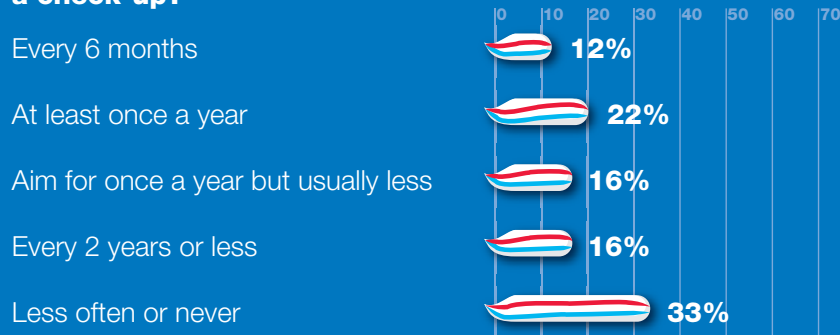
## What Australians believe they could do more of or better to maintain optimal dental health?



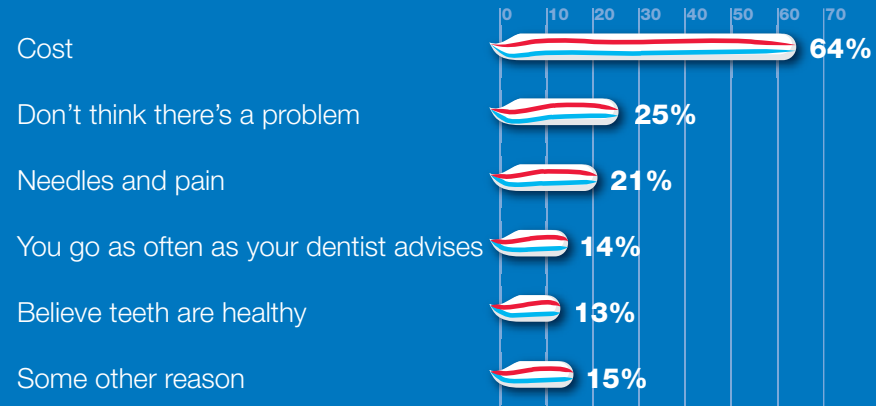
## When did Australians last have a dental check-up?



## How often Australians said they visited the dentist for a check-up?



## Reasons for not having a dental check-up for often?



Using a power toothbrush that features oscillating rotating technology has been shown to remove up to twice as much plaque than a manual flat trim toothbrush and has been clinically proven to help improve gum health. Yet only 22% of Australians choose to use a power toothbrush.

\* 2005 Cochrane Collaboration Review [www.cochrane.org](http://www.cochrane.org)

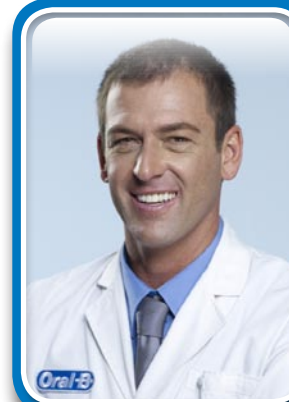
# THE BENEFITS OF POWER – FEELING THE DIFFERENCE IN PLAQUE REMOVAL

When it comes to effective brushing, power toothbrushes do have the edge over regular manual toothbrushes. Power toothbrushes vary depending on the kind of technology they use, but those that feature an oscillating-rotating action (3D cleaning action) provide the most oral health benefits and can help to improve your brushing habits and gum health. Power toothbrush features include:

- brushing modes for sensitive teeth, tooth whitening and gum-massaging
- Pressure sensors to signal when you're brushing too hard
- Timers to help keep track of brushing time
- Digital reminders to alert when brush heads need replacing

According to an independent study by the Cochrane Collaboration, "Power toothbrushes that used rotation oscillation technology were found to remove more plaque than manual toothbrushes in the short and long-term". Oral-B pioneered the oscillating-rotating power technology in 1991 and it has been incorporated into their entire power toothbrush range including the entry tier (lower cost) options, such as the Oral-B Vitality range.

\* 2005 Cochrane Collaboration Review  
[www.cochrane.org](http://www.cochrane.org)



"Taking a preventative approach to oral health will help minimise the risk of having serious and potentially costly dental work down the track. Switching to an oscillation rotation power toothbrush and scheduling regular check-ups will help put your dental health back on track."

*Dentist*  
**Stephen Blatchford**

## TIPS FOR MAINTAINING HEALTHY TEETH AND GUMS

- Brush your teeth twice a day after meals with fluoride toothpaste
- Brush your teeth using a toothbrush with soft bristles
- Floss your teeth every day
- Limit your intake of sweet food and drinks to meal-times only
- Schedule regular dental check-ups at least once a year

### Children

- Assist your child with brushing each day until he or she is eight or nine years old
- Brush your children's teeth
  - When they first appear to 17 months **without toothpaste**
  - 18 months – five years with a pea-sized smear of **low fluoride toothpaste**
  - Six years and older with a pea-sized smear of **standard fluoride toothpaste**
- Schedule your child's first dental visit by their first birthday

### ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This study was conducted online by Galaxy Research with a representative sample size of Australia adults aged 18-64 years. The research was conducted among 1,010 people in both capital and non capital city areas and respondents were randomly selected. The data has been weighted by age, gender and region. For tabulation purposes, percentage points are rounded off to the nearest whole number. In questions that permit multiple responses, columns may total significantly more than 100% depending on the number of different responses offered by each respondent.