

New 'massage method' quadruples protection against tooth decay

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"This 'massage' method proved to be at least as effective as a third brushing in increasing the amount of fluoride in the mouth," Anna Nordström explains. Credit: Photo: University of Gothenburg

Do you really want to avoid cavities in your teeth? Try massaging them with a high-fluoride toothpaste after lunch.

"Rubbing [toothpaste](#) onto your [teeth](#) increases the fluoride protection by 400%," says Anna Nordström, dentist, PhD and researcher at the Sahlgrenska Academy at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

Eight years ago a new brand of toothpaste was launched in Sweden with more than three times as much fluoride as standard toothpaste. Available without prescription, it is aimed primarily at those with high caries risk.

Researchers at the University of Gothenburg's Sahlgrenska Academy have now performed the first scientific evaluation of the effect of this so called "high-fluoride toothpaste". The study has resulted in a new method that quadruples the level of protection from fluoride.

In the study, 16 volunteers tested a variety of brushing techniques, using either high-fluoride or standard toothpaste, and brushing either two or three times a day. "The study revealed that those who used a high-fluoride toothpaste three times a

day had four times better fluoride [protection](#) in the mouth than those who used standard toothpaste twice a day," says researcher Anna Nordström from the Institute of Odontology at the Sahlgrenska Academy.

Also tested was a new method developed in collaboration with professor Downen Birkhed, which involves rubbing toothpaste onto your teeth with a finger. "This 'massage' method proved to be at least as effective as a third brushing in increasing the amount of fluoride in the mouth," Anna Nordström explains. "Rubbing the front of your teeth with toothpaste can be an easy way of giving your teeth a third "shot" of fluoride during the day, after lunch for example. But this should not replace brushing with a fluoride toothpaste morning and evening - it's an extra."

Brushing with fluoride toothpaste has played - and continues to play - a major role in combating tooth decay, and there is strong scientific evidence that daily use of [fluoride toothpaste](#) has a pronounced preventive effect.

More information: The study Effect of a third application of toothpaste (1450 and 5000 ppm F), including a "massage" method, on fluoride retention and pH drop in plaque was published in *Acta Odontologica Scandinavica*. Link to article: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22320714

Provided by University of Gothenburg

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