

Introduction

If you are like me and were raised in contemporary North American culture, you've been told since you were a toddler about the importance of brushing your teeth and visiting the dentist regularly. Your parents (hopefully) showed you how to brush, and if they were really astute, they may have even showed you how to floss. By the time you were a teenager you probably had the hang of it, but you also probably had cavities and other dental problems, especially if you ate a typical teenager's diet.

What I have discovered through my research into dental self care is that we really weren't set up for success as children, and the reason for this is simple. Our parents -- and even our dentists -- didn't really have all the tools to teach us how to care for our teeth and gums. Even if we brushed, flossed and went to the dentist every six months as prescribed, we still got cavities, and may even have ended up with root canals, extractions and other traumatic procedures. But it's not our fault. We weren't given many alternatives.



Most likely, when you became an adult and no longer had your parents to drag you to the dentist, you probably created countless excuses for avoiding the dental chair. But you found out, sooner or later, that ignoring the problem and putting your head in the sand didn't help. In fact, it just made matters worse. It seemed that the whole world could keep right on going, every day, smiling, talking, eating and interacting without ever thinking about oral care. And why not? Ignorance is bliss. But once you found out that you needed a crown or a root canal, suddenly ignorance didn't look so attractive anymore.

In this book I will attempt to not only lift that veil of ignorance, but to show you how all that dental stress can be avoided with just a little more information and education about oral care. In truth, you really *can* bypass the



dentist, not because you're afraid to go, but because you simply *don't have* dental problems. It's just a matter of learning a new daily maintenance regimen that involves some simple, at-home procedures that your childhood dentist knew nothing about. In the pages that follow, I will give you step-by-step instructions for creating new mouth care strategies (and getting rid of old ones) so that you can build stronger, healthier teeth, gums, saliva, tongue and enamel. You may not be able to avoid *ever* going to the dentist again, but you will learn how to make informed decisions about serious issues like root canals and gum surgery.