- Dental care

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN...

You switch to an electric toothbrush

Moving on from manual can take time to adjust

When it comes to phones or kitchen appliances, there's a 'smart' version of just about everything. However, did you know that the electric toothbrush was actually invented over 70 years ago, back in 1954? More recently, research suggests they do a better job at cleaning than their manual counterparts. But with some dentists fearing they promote laziness, here's what you need to consider when switching to smart brushing.

1 YOU'LL LOWER YOUR RISK OF CAVITIES

Those who use electric toothbrushes have significantly less plaque and are at a lower risk of cavities and gum disease, found research. 'Four minutes of electric brushing is equivalent to nine of manual,' says head dental nurse Polly Ruseva (londonsmiling.com). 'Plus, the smaller head and automatic motion can help reach places that are harder to brush.'

2 IT MAKES CLEANING EASIER

As well as improving cleaning effectiveness, electric toothbrushes make things much easier for those with arthritis or limited dexterity, who find moving the brush hard or painful, says Simon Nixon, co-founder of Instasmile (instasmile.com).

Give it a try

If you struggle with dexterity, choose a model with an easy-grip handle and large buttons. Let the brush do the work, with the bristles moving without force. Be aware, battery-powered brushes can become less effective when the batteries run down.



Did you know?

A staggering 55% of Brits don't brush for the recommended full two minutes, twice a day, found a study by Philips UK.

3 YOU'LL EXPERIENCE A FRESHER MOUTH

'Some electric brushes vibrate at speeds up to 31,000 strokes per minute, which should leave your mouth feeling much cleaner,' says Polly. However, this can feel intense – and noisy – for some people and, if you press too hard, it can cause gum irritation. Choose a brush with pressure sensors that alert you if you're pressing too hard, and start off with a low-intensity speed setting to give yourself time to adjust.

4 THE COST CAN ADD UP

A good electric toothbrush can cost anywhere from £30 to £250, while replacement brush heads (which should be changed every three months) add to the expense. 'Look for offers and budget-friendly models that come with extra heads or use subscription services that offer discounts on them,' suggests Simon.

5 CHARGING CAN BE A HASSLE

Most electric brushes last five to 14 days per charge, but forgetting to plug them in can leave you stuck mid-brush, 'which is not only annoying, but this inconsistency can prove a real problem for people with neurodiversity,' says Simon. 'Keep your charger in a visible spot, charge regularly, set an alarm or alert if needed and have a back-up manual brush for emergencies.'

WORDS: SAMANTHA WOOD. PHOTO: GETTY. IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR HEALTH, SEE YOUR GP

COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED • PRINTED FROM PRESSREADER • NOT FOR SALE • PERSONAL COPY