

## A New Toothbrush...

I'll admit it. I am sometimes a creature of habit. Sometimes those habits are bad habits. Actually, more times than I'd like to admit, they're bad habits.

I'll be honest. I don't leave them often enough. I don't know why, we just get attached. All those morning, after lunch, and evening meetings have bound us together. Sometimes they look scraggly and worn, but I still cannot seem to let go. I don't even have to pay retail for a new one. Why can't I just let them go?

No, I'm not Tiger talking about my personal life...I'm talking toothbrushes!

Admit it. There are a few of us (no finger pointing, please), that know we need a new toothbrush. I'll be the first to raise my hand and admit that there is a brush in my dap kit, that has seen better days. Pardon me while I pause to throw it out...

To the best of my knowledge, I've never seen a study on when to throw away that favorite toothbrush. If there have been any, I'd be a bit suspect on who paid for the study. Certain companies might benefit from a "toothbrush every day" conclusion. Since there are no hard and fast rules, here are a few tips on when it might be time to get a new polisher for your tongue and chompers,

*If it looks frazzled, crusty, or worn, chunk it.* Common sense should tell us that a funky looking toothbrush is no longer clean and should be discarded. Remember, it brushes things on your teeth as well as brushing things off.

*After you've been sick, send your toothbrush to the toothbrush fairy.* See the above paragraph about brushing things on. That brush sitting next to your sink harbors bacteria and viruses that it received from your mouth. You may be immune, but you may be keeping those bugs alive to pass on to your friends and family.

*Get your teeth cleaned, get a new brush.* A dental cleaning is a fresh start in removing the plaque and calculus (tartar) that host the bacteria in your mouth. A new brush is so important to you cleaning visit that it is often included for free. A new toothbrush is a good way to freshen up your homecare as well. Those of us fighting gum disease need to switch out brushes even more frequently.

*And finally, if your toothbrush has fewer bristles left than you have teeth...*well, I think you know what to do.

Until next week, keep smiling.

-Please send comments to Drs. Parrish through [www.ParrishDental.com](http://www.ParrishDental.com).