

# ORAL HEALTH AND DEXTERITY

## CONDITIONS AFFECTING DEXTERITY

In the UK, 28% of people with a registered disability experience difficulties with dexterity which can have a big impact on their oral health care.

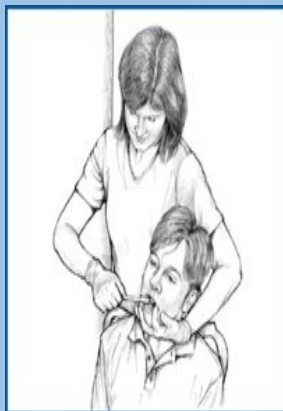
Dexterity may be affected by a variety of conditions such as:

- Stroke
- Enhanced learning needs
- Cerebral Palsy
- Dementia
- Arthritis
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Down's syndrome
- Nerve damage

Children under 7 years of age will need support in brushing their teeth

## TOP TIPS FOR BRUSHING SOMEONE ELSE'S TEETH

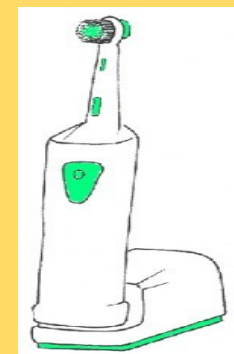
- 1) Before you start brushing tell the person you are caring for what you will be doing and how you will do it
- 2) Stand behind the person or lean against a wall for extra support.
- 3) Use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste on the bristles of the toothbrush. Brush in small, circular movements on the outside, biting and Inside surfaces of the teeth. Spit but don't rinse



## ORAL HEALTH AIDS

When brushing your teeth it is important to reach all areas of the mouth .

- ◆ Use a small-medium headed toothbrush with soft-medium bristles
- ◆ 3-sided toothbrushes may be helpful for some individuals
- ◆ Some adaptations can be fitted to manual toothbrushes to make them easier to hold ie putty, foam, tube grip, bike handle grip
- ◆ Electric toothbrushes may be easier to hold for someone with limited dexterity as they have a larger handle
- ◆ Pump operated toothpaste dispensers and tube squeezers may help those with reduced dexterity to apply toothpaste to their toothbrush
- ◆ A bite guard can be used at the side of the mouth to keep the mouth open whilst brushing



For further information see [www.dentalhealth.org](http://www.dentalhealth.org)