

IFDH Electric Toothbrush Knowledge and Recommendation Habits Survey

BACKGROUND

This report summarizes key results from the third survey in a 3-survey series by the IFDH supported by Procter & Gamble. The purpose of this survey was to explore global dental hygienists' knowledge and recommendation habits regarding electric toothbrushes. The survey was conducted from November 3 to December 11, 2020.

Click the links below to learn more about the other IFDH surveys in this series:

[2020 Covid Survey](#) [2019 Toothpaste Survey](#)

RESPONDENTS

4,345 respondents from 36 countries

Top 4 countries

- USA — 72%
- Korea — 5%
- Italy — 4%
- Switzerland — 3%

Countries with 1–2%

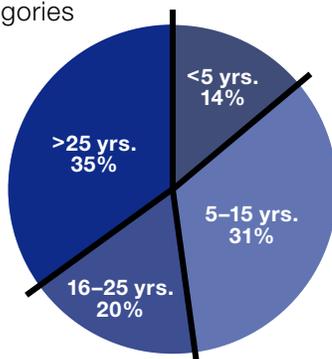
Israel, South Africa, Finland, New Zealand, Canada, Norway, Latvia, Australia, Portugal, Netherlands, Sweden, India, Malta

Countries with <1%

Spain, Ireland, Denmark, Russia, United Kingdom, Japan, Austria, Germany, Norway, Armenia, Bhutan, Colombia, Czech Republic, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Nigeria, Philippines, Swaziland, United Arab Emirates

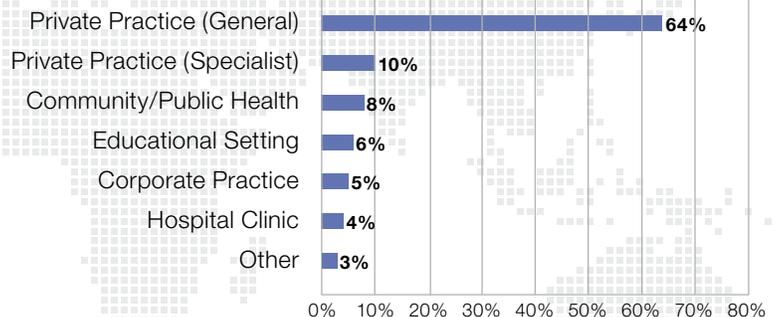
Years of experience

Balanced representation across categories



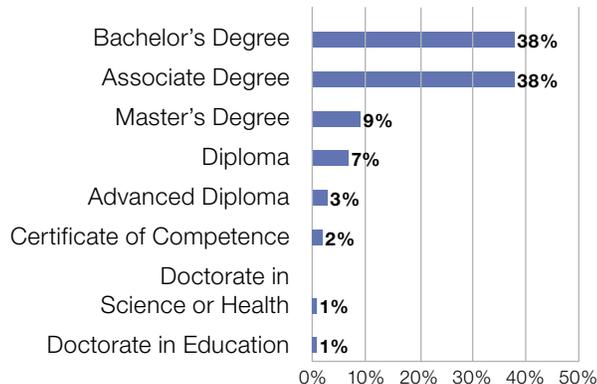
Work setting

Majority in private practice, general dentistry



Education

76% have a 2- or 4-year degree

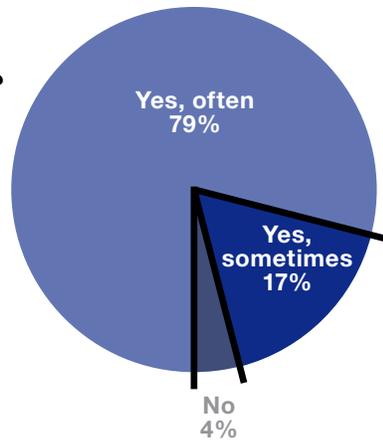


Survey supported by Procter & Gamble.



Do you recommend electric toothbrushes?

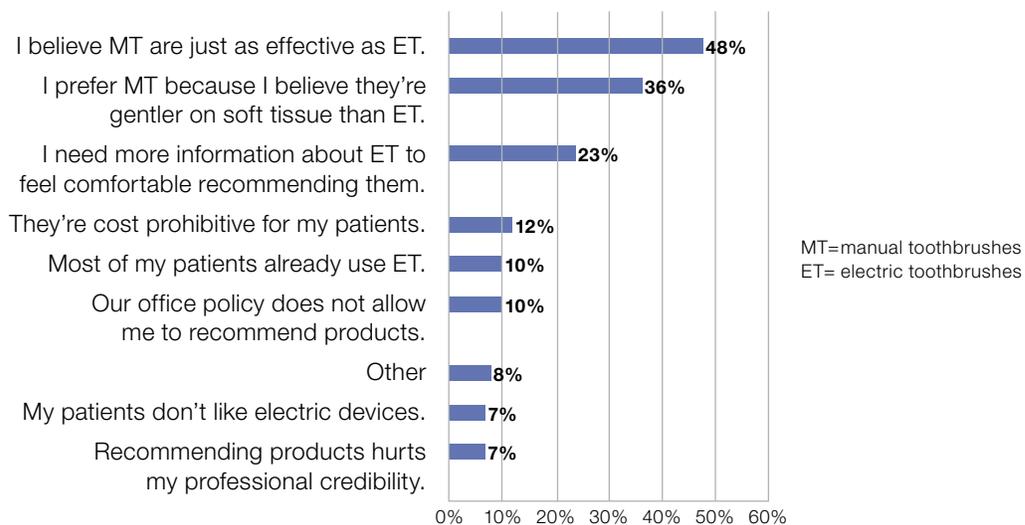
96% recommend electric toothbrushes



Why don't you recommend electric toothbrushes? (check all that apply)

Among those who don't recommend, top 3 reasons are:

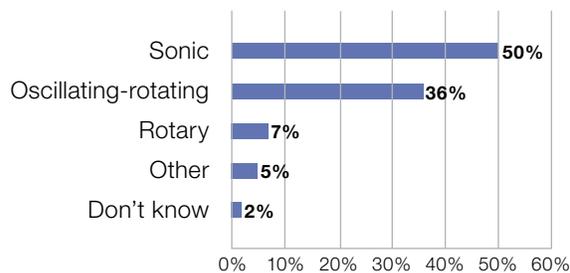
1. Believe manual brushes are just as effective
2. Believe manual brushes are gentler on soft tissues
3. Need more information



Which type of electric toothbrush do you recommend most?

Most popular electric toothbrush type recommended:

- Sonic
- Oscillating-rotating



To which type of patients do you recommend electric toothbrushes?

(check all that apply)

Electric brushes recommended for most patient types, except young children

All patients	58%
Adults with consistent plaque build-up	48%
Adults with gingival health issues	45%
Patients with limited dexterity	45%
Perio maintenance patients	43%
Orthodontic patients	39%
Elderly	38%
Adolescents (10–18 years)	33%
Caretakers	30%
Implant patients	27%
Children (6–9 years)	19%
Young children (3–5 years)	7%
Other	2%

To which type of patients would you NOT recommend electric toothbrushes? (check all that apply)

Few respondents would recommend against using an electric brush. Most common patients not to receive reco are post-surgical and young children.

None, an electric toothbrush would be appropriate for all patients	50%
Post-surgical patients	27%
Young children (3–5 years)	23%
Aggressive brushers	8%
Patients with erosive tooth wear	8%
Patients with dentinal hypersensitivity	7%
Adults with gingival recession	5%
Children (6–9 years)	5%
Other	4%
Orthodontic patients	3%
Implant patients	2%
Adolescents (10–18 years)	2%

Which resources do you use to assist you in making clinical decisions for recommending ELECTRIC TOOTHBRUSHES to your patients?

(check all that apply)

Common resources to make electric brush recommendation:

- Personal usage
- Peer feedback
- Publications

My personal usage experience	83%
Feedback from my colleagues/peers	52%
Peer-reviewed journals (e.g., Int J Dent Hyg)	52%
Professional magazines (e.g., RDH, Access)	45%
Manufacturer's professional sales rep information	35%
Online patient education/instructional videos by industry	25%
Pamphlets supplied by manufacturers	22%
Manufacturer's product website	20%
Educational posters	11%
Textbooks	10%
Social media websites (e.g., Facebook groups)	10%
Other	4%

Most popular sales rep resources are from:

1. Oral-B
2. Sonicare

Oral-B (Procter & Gamble)	78%
Sonicare (Philips)	66%
WaterPik	3%
Other	3%
Burst	2%

N=1474

What type of information do patients request regarding electric toothbrushes? *(check all that apply)*

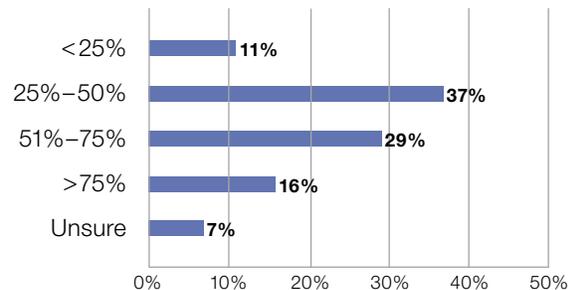
Most common information patients seek about electric toothbrushes:

1. Comparison vs. manual toothbrushes
2. Comparison vs. other electric models
3. Cost

How an electric toothbrush compares to a manual toothbrush	72%
The cost of the electric toothbrush	72%
Differences between types of electric toothbrushes	69%
How often to replace the brush head	59%
The cost of the electric toothbrush heads	47%
Electric toothbrushing instructions	45%
How an electric toothbrush works	40%
Tell-show-do method	38%
If an electric toothbrush is safe to use	36%
If the electric toothbrush handle can be shared with other family members	31%
How to clean an electric toothbrush	17%
How to use the App with the electric toothbrush	8%
None; my patients don't request information regarding electric toothbrushes	2%
Other	1%

As best as you can say, what percentage of your patients purchase an electric toothbrush after you recommend it?

45% say more than half of patients act on recommendation to purchase an electric brush.



Most respondents agree:

- Electric brushes provide better cleaning and gingival health benefits vs. manual
- Pressure sensor is valuable to control force
- Electric toothbrushes are safe, helpful to patients of all ages

Statement	% strongly agree
There is strong evidence that ET remove more plaque than MT.	66%
I prefer patients use an ET with a pressure sensor so they brush with the right amount of force.	65%
ET are beneficial for patients of all ages, from young children to elderly.	59%
My patients who use ET have noticeably better gingival health.	57%
There is strong evidence that ET reduce gingival bleeding more than MT.	54%
There is strong evidence that ET transition more patients to gingival health than MT.	54%
ET are just as gentle and safe as MT.	53%
There are differences in plaque removal effectiveness among the various types of ET.	39%
Smart toothbrushes with an App to track brushing time and behavior are valuable to help patients develop better brushing habits	19%

MT=manual toothbrushes
ET= electric toothbrushes