

# Healthy You

FAST FACTS FOR YOUR HEALTH

## Waterpik Flossing Toothbrush: Is It Worth the Money?

When it comes to modern at-home dental advancements, it's hard to top the first-ever flossing toothbrush: the Waterpik Sonic Fusion. The product is an electric toothbrush and water flosser in one – designed to simplify and supercharge your daily dental routine.

But if you're used to buying a few manual toothbrushes each year, the price tag of the Waterpik Sonic Fusion could make you wonder, "Is it really worth the cost?"

Here, we break down the pros and cons of the Waterpik Sonic Fusion to help you make the right decision for you. But first, let's take a look at the Waterpik Sonic Fusion.

### Waterpik Sonic Fusion: The Bells and Whistles

The Waterpik Sonic Fusion is a combination electric toothbrush and water flosser that can be used in three ways.

1. Toothbrush only
2. Water flosser only
3. Toothbrush and water flosser at the same time

The Waterpik Sonic Fusion uses a countertop base with a small water tank that supplies the water flossing feature. The base also contains a dial where you can adjust the water pressure, and you can adjust bristle speed with buttons on the brush handle. The product uses special replacement heads that contain a small valve located within the bristles through which the water shoots through to floss the teeth.

Like all toothbrushing, you should brush for 2 minutes per session with the Waterpik Sonic Fusion. The device contains a timer to ensure you brush for the recommended time.

According to the manufacturer, a clinical study found that the Waterpik Sonic Fusion was twice as effective at reducing plaque and improving gum health compared to traditional brushing and flossing.<sup>1</sup>

## The Pros and Cons

### **Pro: May encourage better at-home dental hygiene**

Some people find that manual brushing and flossing becomes more challenging because aging is linked to less grip strength and nimbleness.<sup>2</sup> It can become harder to grip a small manual toothbrush or maneuver string floss, and that may lead to avoiding twice daily brushing and flossing. The Waterpik Sonic Fusion may be easier for older adults to grip and use, and the water flossing element may be easier to use as well, which will lead to better at-home hygiene and better overall oral health.

### **Con: Cost**

At the time of writing, the Waterpik Sonic Fusion (non-professional version) sold for \$160 on Amazon, a striking price tag compared to the cost of a manual toothbrush. Comparing prices online or waiting to purchase during a holiday sales event is a smart financial move. In addition to the initial cost, you will need to consider the added cost of replacement toothbrush heads, as you will need to buy the Sonic Fusion replacement heads (other electric toothbrush replacement heads will not work, as they do not feature the special water flossing valve).

### **Pro: Cleans better than manual brushing and flossing**

The Waterpik manufacturer cites a study that the Waterpik Sonic Fusion was twice as effective at reducing plaque and improving gum health compared to traditional brushing and flossing.<sup>1</sup>

### **Con: Messy**

Water flossing is messier than traditional string flossing, so you'll have to lean over the sink to contain spills while flossing.

### **Pro: Accepted by the American Dental Association (ADA)**

When considering buying a dental product, seeing the ADA Seal of Acceptance provides you with peace of mind – and the Waterpik Sonic Fusion has it. The seal has been around for more than 90 years and is given after a review by a panel of independent experts deem the product safe and effective.<sup>3</sup>

## **The Bottom Line**

The best toothbrush you'll ever own is the one you actually use. If manual toothbrushing and string floss are difficult to use, you may avoid them altogether – and this can lead to oral health problems that are far more expensive to treat than the cost of a Waterpik Sonic Fusion. An investment in a Waterpik flossing toothbrush may be well worth it if it encourages you to maintain a twice daily brushing and flossing routine without discomfort and frustration.

## **REFERENCES:**

<https://www.waterpik.com/oral-health/lp/sonic-fusion>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4331509/>

<https://www.ada.org/resources/research/science-and-research-institute/ada-seal-of-acceptance>

## **SOURCES:**

<https://www.waterpik.com/oral-health/lp/sonic-fusion/>

<https://www.dentaly.org/us/best-electric-toothbrush/waterpik-sonic-fusion-review/>

# Will Sedation Dentistry Ease Your Fear of the Dentist's Office?

Fear and anxiety around going to the dentist's office is a common thing: Nearly 20% of people report having it.<sup>1</sup> For some, their discomfort makes them skip their preventive dental exams. Avoiding these exams can lead to bigger problems, because they are designed to find problems at their earliest stages – when they're easier (and less painful) to treat.

If you have dental fear and anxiety, you don't have to suffer through your appointments to get the oral healthcare you need. Dentists have several ways to put you at ease during your appointment, and sedation may be your solution for achieving a more comfortable appointment.

Sedation dentistry comes in several forms and strengths, ranging from mild (you're still awake) to deep (you're unconscious during the procedure). Your specific comfort level with dental appointments and the procedure you're undergoing will be considered when selecting the right type of sedation for you.

## Types of Sedation

Your dentist may be able to offer different types of sedation to help you relax during a dental procedure. Some are light and mild, while others put you entirely to sleep.

### *Nitrous Oxide*

If you want to feel calmer during your dental visits, nitrous oxide may be a good option for you. Nitrous oxide is among the mildest forms of sedation, and you may know it as "laughing gas." Nitrous oxide is delivered via gas that you inhale through a mask. It helps relieve pain and anxiety, and it's safe for children to use.

### *Intravenous (IV) Sedation*

IV sedation provides a moderate level of sedation, although IV sedation can vary from light to deep depending on how much your dentist uses. IV sedation is injected and works quickly, and it's often used for longer dental procedures (like wisdom teeth removal).

### *General Anesthesia*

General anesthesia is the deepest form of sedation, as you will be unconscious during your dental procedure. It may be delivered via gas or injected into the bloodstream using an IV. General anesthesia is used less often compared to nitrous oxide and IV sedation, but it may be helpful for a long dental procedure.

If you think sedation dentistry may help you or a loved one achieve more comfortable or safer dental care, talk to your dentist about the types of sedation dentistry they offer. It's also important to ask about the cost of adding sedation to your procedure and the specific training your dentist has in sedation. Your dentist can provide an estimate before you have the service, and you can call Delta Dental of Iowa's Customer Service team at the number on the back of your ID card to learn more about whether sedation is covered under your plan.

## REFERENCE

1. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29118148/>