

ASK US ANYTHING

OUR FEATURED EXPERTS THIS MONTH ARE...

IS IT BETTER TO FLOSS MY TEETH BEFORE OR AFTER BRUSHING THEM?

● Sal, via Facebook

ANSWER The National Health Service in the UK throws its weight behind flossing *before* brushing. That said, I checked in with the Australian Dental Association who recommend flossing once a day and say before or after brushing doesn't matter, as long as you do it. Science agrees it should be done: 12 studies, reviewed in 2012, found flossing reduces gingivitis and plaque build-up – but no studies identified a better time to do it. The bottom line? Floss before or after brushing, and get regular dental check-ups to protect your pearly whites.
DR GINNI MANSBERG

HOW DO I STOP CRAVING SWEETS IMMEDIATELY AFTER A MEAL?

● Polly, via email

ANSWER Think about whether your sweet craving really does kick in after every single meal, or are you just conditioned to crave the sweet stuff? Usually, it's just a habit. The quickest way to break the cycle is to brush your teeth (or use a breath mint when you're out and about).

This sends a message to your palate that you've finished eating.

A glass of water or piece of fruit can also help break your post-meal sweet craving. Also make sure your meals contain enough protein and dietary fibre and you're eating gut-friendly foods such as kombucha, sauerkraut, kimchi and kefir to help nix the craving in the longer term.

KRISTEN BECK

THE SOAPBOX

Is online dating over in 2017?

2016 WAS A BAD YEAR FOR MANY THINGS, INCLUDING DATING. TINDER FATIGUE AND DATING ADHD (WHERE IMPATIENT USERS ARE QUICK TO SWIPE LEFT AT THE TINIEST PERCEIVED FLAWS DUE TO LIMITLESS OPTIONS) ARE REAL THINGS. SO WHAT'S A GIRL LOOKING FOR ROMANCE OR AN LTR TO DO? SHOULD WE GO BACK TO TALKING TO MEN IRL? WH EMOTIONS EXPERT DR ALICE BOYES ISN'T SO QUICK TO DISMISS ONLINE DATING.

"There's no sign of dating apps being anywhere near dead. What hooks us? The fact we all know people who met their lovely, normal, desirable long-term partner on Tinder. The fatigue people feel with aspects of dating culture is real, but it's not new. Dating has always been full of emotional ups and downs, and a string of bad dates has always been an express pass to a sense of loneliness.

The thing is, couples still meet through work, friends, family, in bars and on backpacking trips through South-East



Asia. And most people tend to sabotage their relationships in the same ways regardless of how they hook up. Someone excessively critical of people on an app is just as harsh in judging whoever their friends or colleagues set them up with.

Since dating apps are a competitive space, new apps emerge to try to solve problems existing ones have (eg, Whim, which skips the pre-date conversation and immediately matches singles for meet-ups). But it's not the responsibility of apps to save us from the trial and error of dating. The user base doesn't change as apps do: the same douchebags who are on one platform jump to the next one! Since most apps rely on having a large user base, developers are hesitant to exclude too many people. But humans are complex and it's going to be a while before an algorithm can predict our perfect partner. And, to be honest, who would want that anyway?"

