

Health Tips For Happy Teeth



Do you know about the BC Healthy Kids Dental Program?

- Children (18 years and under) of families who have been approved for MSP supplementary benefits may be eligible for basic dental treatment.
- For more information call **1-866-866-0800** or visit www.gov.bc.ca/msp

Are Power Toothbrushes Good For My Child?



- Power toothbrushes have become affordable and many children are using them. While the power brush may provide a good cleaning action, it can only clean if properly placed on each tooth.
- Brush twice daily - **after breakfast and before bedtime**. Help brush your child's teeth until their fine motor skills develop, which is around 8 years of age.
- Children like to brush their own teeth and should be allowed to try in order to learn the skill. However, young children do not have the coordination and will miss spots. Parents still need to finish the job to make sure every surface of every tooth has been brushed.
- When brushing the outside and inside of teeth, angle bristles toward the gum line and wiggle back and forth with short strokes. Brush back and forth on the chewing surfaces of teeth.
- Be a good role model. Make sure your child sees you brushing and flossing daily.



About Toothpaste

Using fluoride toothpaste is one of the best ways to prevent cavities. Always supervise the amount of toothpaste used and teach your child to spit out toothpaste while brushing. Children do not need special ingredients such as “anti-tartar” or “whitening” agents found in adult toothpastes. Use a grain of rice-size amount of toothpaste up to 3 years of age and a pea-size for ages 3-6 years.

What you Eat Affects your Oral Health



- Dairy products and some non-dairy products provide calcium and vitamin D for strengthening teeth as they form.
- Enriched breads and cereals supply B vitamins for growth and iron for healthy blood, which leads to healthy gum tissue.
- Fruits and vegetables containing vitamin C are essential for healthy gums.
- Lean meat, fish, poultry and beans provide magnesium and zinc for teeth.



What About Snacks?

Every time you eat or drink you are feeding not only yourself but also the bacteria that live in your mouth. The decay-causing bacteria break down the food and produce acid. This acid may then attack the teeth, eventually causing decay. When snacking watch:

Stickiness

How long the food stays on the teeth

- Eat sticky foods with meals, instead of by themselves as a snack.
- Brush your teeth or rinse with water to remove sticky foods from teeth.
- Pair sugary/starchy foods with fresh fruits, vegetables or cheese.
- Limit processed packaged foods, i.e., fruit rollups, fish crackers. Fresh is best.
- Limit foods that cling to teeth.



Frequency

Limit the number of snacks eaten daily

- To cut down acid attacks on teeth, avoid nibbling and sipping all day long.
- Drink water between meals instead of fruit drinks, pop, juice or flavoured milk.



Tooth Decay can be Sealed Out!

Your dentist can help prevent tooth decay by applying sealants to your child's teeth. A sealant is a clear plastic material applied to the chewing surfaces of the back teeth that is highly effective. Permanent molars may develop deep grooves that are difficult to clean; the sealant acts as a barrier to decay.

Talk to your dentist about this important preventive treatment. Don't wait until it hurts; regular dental visits cost less.