



Dental and Oral Health Promotion



Why is Oral Health important?

Poor oral health impacts greatly on a child's development. Poor oral health can lead to just some of the following:

- Failure to thrive
- Anxiety
- Time off school/work
- Pain
- Sleepless nights
- Difficult eating
- Social isolation
- Impacts family life

Diet

Sugar is sole cause of tooth decay. Even natural sugars (such as those found in milk and fruit have the potential to cause tooth decay). Foods containing more than 5g of sugar out of every 100g can lead to a sugar attack on teeth. Snacking of fruits, cakes, chocolate and other sweet treats will lead to tooth decay.

TIPS

- It is advisable to consume treats on one day only (i.e. treat days)
- Whole fruit is better than juices and smoothies
- Avoid milk during the night as this can lead to 'bottle decay' or 'milk decay'
- 'Safe snacks' are great, These include breadsticks, veg sticks, cheese and nuts
- Diet fizzy drinks and other acidic products will cause dental erosion (teeth become thinner)
- Eat cheese/use sugar free gum after sweet foods
- Use an open cup for weaning, rather than sippy cups

Brushing

- Brushing should begin as soon as tooth erupts
- Brush twice a day—at night, and any other time of day
- Children under 7 should have their brushing supervised and be assisted
- Most people forget to brush the part of the teeth that is near the gums
- A small, medium-bristled brush is best
- Change your toothbrush every 2-3 months

My
very
first
Tooth



Toothpastes and Mouthwashes

- Toothpastes containing fluoride is one of the most effective ways of protecting teeth from decay
- Spit toothpaste out, don't rinse
- Mouthwashes can be used from the age of 8 years, but they should always be used at a different time to brushing e.g. after school, after lunch
- Use regular toothpaste, avoid abrasive, whitening pastes
- Avoid sweet toothpastes, unflavoured toothpastes are available e.g. Oranurse

Dummies and Thumb sucking

- Dummies are better than thumb sucking
- Dummies/thumb sucking ideally should be discouraged by the age of 3
- Both dummies and thumb sucking may affect how the teeth and mouth form, and braces may be needed in the future (depending on when the child stopped the habit)
- No honey/sweet liquids on the dummy

Trauma

Act quickly! Adult teeth to be put back in place within 1 hour ideally.

Knocked a tooth out ? Don't panic—here's what to do:

Step 1: Pick the tooth up by the crown only (do not touch the root)

Step 2: Lick the tooth clean if it is dirty, or rinse it in water

Step 3: Stick the tooth back in position (adult teeth only)

*****Never try to re-insert a baby tooth*****

Step 4: Bite on a handkerchief to hold it in place

Step 5: Go straight to a dentist



All children and young people should visit a dentist!

The best way to find one is via NHS Choices

Patients can no longer 'register' at a dentist, unlike a GP. Children do not have to see the same dentist as their parents.

NHS treatment is free of charge for those up to age 18