



**DENTAL
HEALTH
GOOD
HABITS
START
EARLY**

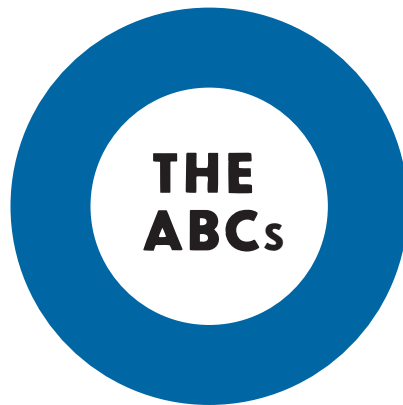


Teach
Nutrition.caTM

By Dairy Farmers of Canada's
Registered Dietitians

CRUSH CAVITIES!

Establish a good oral hygiene routine with your child to help prevent cavities and gum disease.



A

Brush teeth at least **twice a day**:

- Under age 3: Talk to a dental professional to find out if you should use plain water or fluoridated toothpaste when brushing your child's teeth.
- Ages 3-6: Use a pea-sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste when you help your child brush their teeth.

B

Don't rush! Brush teeth for **2 minutes**.

C

Floss **daily** to remove plaque between your child's teeth.

D

Book your child's **first dental checkup** by age one, or within six months of their first tooth coming in, whichever comes first.



TEACH GOOD BRUSHING TECHNIQUE



Hold the toothbrush at a **45-degree angle** to the teeth. Point the bristles to where the teeth meet the gums.



Use **gentle circles** to clean the inside and outside of every tooth.



Do not scrub. You can hurt the gums by brushing too hard.



Did you know?

Plaque is a sticky film that contains bacteria.

It can build up on teeth and lead to gum infections, gum disease and tooth decay.



Hungry for more?

For more information on dental care for children, visit the **Canadian Dental Association** website.

YOU'RE SWEET ENOUGH!

Sugar is one of the leading causes of cavities.

Here are two easy ways to protect your child's teeth:

01

LIMIT SUGARY FOODS AND DRINKS

- **Hard candy and lollipops** that stay in the mouth for a long time.
- **Soft, sticky sweets** that stick to the teeth such as toffee, chewy candy, rolled-up fruit snacks and fruit leather.
- **Sugary and acidic drinks** such as pop, sports drinks, fruit juice and fruit drinks.

02

RETHINK YOUR DRINK

- **Offer water between meals.**
- **Serve milk or water at mealtimes.**
- **Add sliced fruit**, such as strawberries, apples or oranges, to your child's water.

**A BALANCED
DIET CAN INCLUDE
SUGARY ITEMS
FROM TIME
TO TIME**

When your child has these items, it is best to have them as part of a meal and to brush teeth shortly after.

IF YOUR CHILD CAN'T BRUSH AFTER EATING, TRY THESE SUGGESTIONS:

- 01** Serve pieces of hard cheese.
- 02** Serve **crunchy foods** such as raw vegetables and nuts.*
- 03** Give your child **sugar-free gum** to chew.*
- 04** Make sure they **drink water** after eating to help remove sugar from teeth.



* Be aware that crunchy vegetables, nuts and gum are a choking risk for children under the age of 4.



Did you know?

Acidic drinks attack enamel, the hard outer layer of teeth, and can contribute to cavities.

Saliva washes away harmful sugar, acid and food particles, helping prevent tooth decay.

Hard cheeses like Cheddar or Mozzarella help remove food particles from teeth and provide calcium, which helps teeth stay strong and healthy.

Sugary drinks are the leading source of sugar in the Canadian diet.

SMART SNACKING

Your child needs snacks to have energy to learn, play and grow.

SNACKS 101

Include 1 or 2 foods in your child's snack. Offer foods from the 3 categories in *Canada's Food Guide* (vegetables and fruits, whole grain foods and protein foods).

REACH FOR CALCIUM TO KEEP TEETH STRONG

Double the health benefits! When preparing snacks, include protein foods that are high in calcium, such as milk, yogurt, cheese, firm tofu and canned salmon with bones.



Did you know?

Children and teens have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to build strong bones and teeth. **That's why they need calcium-rich foods and drinks each day.**

Milk products are a leading source of calcium and are an important part of a healthy diet for growing children.

**EASY
SNACK
IDEAS**

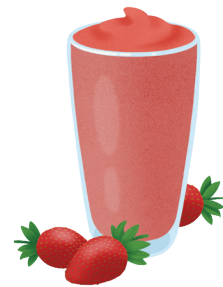
01

**Apple or pear slices
with hard cheese**



02

**Smoothie made with
fruit, milk and yogurt**



03

**Veggie sticks with
yogurt dip or hummus**



04

**Egg or tuna salad with
whole grain crackers**



MAKE BRUSHING FUN



Superhero challenge

Get your child to pretend they're a superhero armed with a secret weapon—their toothbrush. **Their mission: to rescue their teeth from the bad guys, the Plaque Monsters.**

Brushing challenge

Set a timer for 2 minutes and see which family members can brush their teeth for the entire time.

Everyone who makes it to the end gets a sticker. Collect five stickers and win a small prize!