



ORAL HEALTH

GOOD EATING HABITS ARE AS IMPORTANT TO HEALTH OF YOUR TEETH AND GUMS AS BRUSHING AND FLOSSING

DO choose dairy products and nuts. They're low in sugar and high in protein calcium and phosphorous to help build strong teeth and prevent tooth decay and raw veggies crunch fruit popcorn and sugar-free beverages don't stick to teeth, preventing the bacteria buildup that can lead to gum disease.

DON'T eat a lot of sugary, high carbohydrates foods. Did you know? Sweets and fruit juices can stick to your teeth and gums, which make your mouth, produce more acid and attract bacteria.

DO Boost your intake of vitamin C. People who consume less than 60mg a day are one and a half times more likely to get gum disease than those who consume 180 mg a day.

DON'T rely on bottled water—unlike some tap water a lot of bottled water lacks fluoride. Fluoride helps prevent and reverse the early stages of tooth decay by strengthening tooth enamel.

Most children have three or four teeth by the time they are 12 months old and all 20 teeth (primary) by the time they are 3. Your child's first teeth are just as important as her permanent teeth and should be given proper care; if their first teeth are lost too soon, the adjoining teeth may drift closer together leaving less space for the permanent teeth to emerge. This can lead to overcrowding or crooked permanent teeth and you child may need braces or extractions later on.



ORAL HEALTH

WHAT IS TOOTH DECAY

When teeth are not cleaned properly; plaque - a combination of food, mucus and bacteria - builds on the teeth. Tiny holes or cavities are caused when food residue comes in contact with bacteria thereby producing acid. Fluoride strengthens the teeth and helps to prevent tooth decay; it is found in many brands of toothpaste and to water supplies. Fluoride supplements should only be given on your doctor or dentist's recommendation. Children's fluoride toothpaste contains smaller amounts than ordinary fluoride toothpaste because children tend to swallow their toothpaste. Check with your dentist if you are not sure of the toothpaste for your child.

BRUSHING HER TEETH

Start cleaning your child's teeth as soon as her first teeth emerge; for your toddler, use a soft child-size toothbrush with no more than a small pea-size amount of fluoride toothpaste. Brush the teeth in circular motions covering the inner, the outer and biting surfaces of the teeth and covering the gums as well. Get her to spit the paste out instead of rinsing with water as this may reduce the benefit of fluoride. Use damp gauze with a tiny amount of toothpaste to clean the teeth of the reluctant child; wrap your finger over the damp gauze and clean away.

