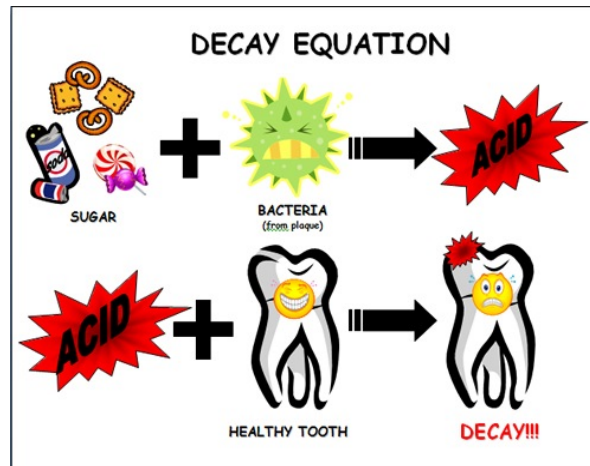


Toddlers and Preschoolers Cavity Prevention

For cavities to form, bacteria and sugar have to be present. This cavity causing bacteria is usually passed onto the child by a parent or caregiver through saliva. This bacteria then uses the sugar (carbohydrates) for food and makes acid. Prolonged exposures to acid weakens the teeth and forms cavities.



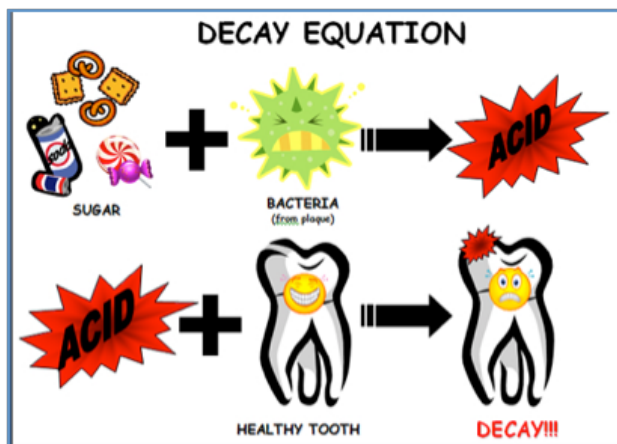
We prevent cavities by limiting sugar exposure to the teeth, and brushing and flossing to remove sugars. Follow these additional tips to help prevent cavities:

- 1) **Limit sugar (carbohydrate) containing foods and drinks to meal and snacktimes.** Avoid prolonged and in-between meal exposure to sugary liquids and snacks.
 - A. Drink Water NOT milk, juice, koolaid in a sippy cup.
 - B. Snack on Cheese, celery, apples NOT goldfish crackers, cheerios, raisins.
- 2) **Check nutrition labels.** Advertising is deceiving. "No sugar added" fruit juice still is still high in sugar.
- 3) **No juice or milk at bedtime!** The sugary liquids pool around the teeth while the child sleeps and acids attack. After multiple attacks, the teeth will decay.
- 4) **Start brushing the teeth as soon as they erupt.** Brush after breakfast and right before bed. Parents should brush until age 8.
- 5) **Use fluoride toothpaste** in the recommended amounts to help strengthen the enamel and increase its resistance to acid attacks.
 - A. Under 2 years: "rice grain" smear
 - B. Ages 2-5: "English pea" sized
- 6) **Flossing between any teeth that are touching.** Toothbrushes can't get to this area, and bacteria (and their acids) will be left behind.
- 7) **Limit the transfer of cavity-causing bacteria** to your child by maintaining good oral health and limiting saliva sharing activities.

School Age Children and Adolescents

Cavity Prevention

For cavities to form, bacteria and sugar have to be present. Bacteria uses the sugar (carbohydrates) for food and makes acid as a by product. Prolonged exposures to acid weakens teeth and forms cavities. **We can prevent cavities by limiting the time our teeth are exposed to these sugars (carbohydrates) and by decreasing the bacteria in our mouth.**



Healthy Diet Choices

- 1) **Avoid grazing on highly processed, high carbohydrate (sugar) junk foods** such as chips, crackers, cookies, etc. Check nutrition labels.
 - a. Limit these snacks to 2-3 times/week and eat at mealtimes
 - b. Whole fruits, veggies, cheese, etc are a better choice
- 2) **Limit juice, sodas and sports drinks** (even sugar free DIET drinks are a problem because of their ACID content) ****ACID causes CAVITIES****
 - a. Try not to drink more than one cup of these poor choices and drink them during a meal.
 - b. WATER and MILK are better choices for strong teeth and bones.
- 3) **Avoid sticky candies and dried fruits**--Starbursts, Skittles, Fruit Snacks, Gummies, Gummy Vitamins, raisins, etc
 - a. These tend to stick in the grooves of the teeth and are difficult to remove even with brushing and flossing
 - b. The sticky texture dissolves slowly and result in prolonged tooth exposure to acids!
 - c. Chocolate that melts easily and ice cream are better choices

Clean Teeth

- 1) **Brush your teeth in the morning after breakfast and before going to bed** with a fluoride toothpaste
- 2) After brushing, spit out the excess toothpaste, but **do NOT rinse with water**. Rinsing with water rinses away the beneficial fluoride
- 3) **Floss every day** between any teeth that are touching