

Nutrition & Oral Health



When you eat and what you eat affects your general health including your teeth and gums.

- Eating nutritious meals is important to keep your body healthy, but it keeps your mouth healthy too.
- Too many sweet snacks and drinks can cause cavities and dental disease.
- Grazing all day keeps the bacteria in the mouth producing acid that attacks enamel causing cavities to form.

Choose healthy foods, and avoid snacking on sweets and drinking sweetened beverages.

- The germs (bacteria) in the mouth form a sticky material on the surface of the teeth called plaque .
- The germs in the plaque use the sugar from the foods you eat and turn it into acid.
- The acids are powerful enough to dissolve the enamel that covers the teeth, causing cavities.
- When the snacks and drinks that are high in sugar are not eaten the bacteria doesn't have enough "food" to produce the acid the destroys enamel.

To help keep your teeth and gums healthy, limit sugary snacks and eat nutritious foods with choices from each of the five food groups:

- Breads, grains and cereals
- Dairy, milk, cheese, yogurt
- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Meat, fish, poultry and other proteins like beans

Try to limit the amount of foods and beverages with added sugars and brush well after eating snacks or meals that are high in starch like tortillas and some breads.

Good oral health depends on more than just nutrition alone. Caring for teeth and gums is important too.

- Brush at least twice a day with a fluoridated toothpaste
- Floss between the teeth once a day to remove food and debris that might cause cavities between the teeth
- See a dental health professional for regular check-ups and treatment for any dental problems

Together with proper nutrition these habits can help prevent dental disease.

