

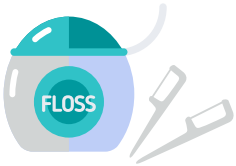
Healthy mouths, healthy kids

Caring for children's teeth

Most childhood dental disease can be prevented by four easy steps



1 Brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste



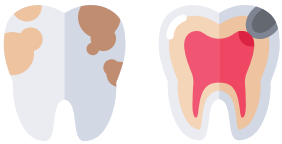
2 Flossing daily



3 Drinking tap water It's sugar-free and contains fluoride, which protects teeth against decay.



4 Visiting the dentist for a check-up at least once a year



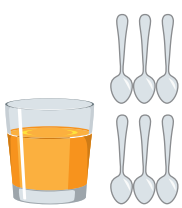
Did you know tooth decay is the most common chronic disease in childhood?

Tooth decay occurs when bacteria in our mouths use sugars from foods and drinks to produce acids that attack tooth enamel (the hard outer layer of teeth). Tooth decay can cause pain, infection and tooth loss. Without treatment, it can destroy children's teeth and have a serious, lasting impact on their overall health and quality of life.

Limit the amount of sugar consumed in foods and drinks



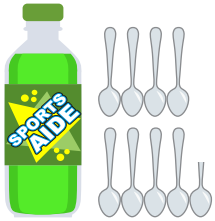
How much sugar do you drink?



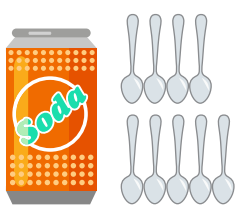
6 teaspoons of sugar in one 250ml cup of fruit juice



7 teaspoons of sugar in one 300ml serve of flavoured milk



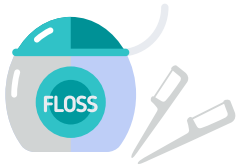
8.5 teaspoons of sugar in one 600ml bottle of sports drink



9 teaspoons of sugar in one 375ml can of soft drink









How to brush

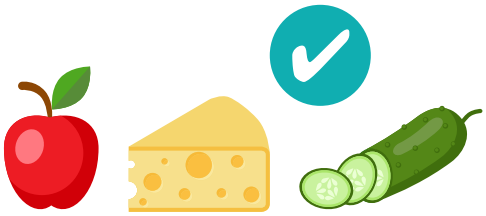
- Brush for two minutes twice a day: after breakfast and before bed
- Brush every surface of every tooth, all the way to the gums
- Use a gentle, circular motion to brush the outside surfaces (the ones that show when you smile) and the inside surfaces (the ones facing towards the back of the mouth)
- Gently scrub the chewing surfaces of the top and bottom teeth
- Spit out the toothpaste, don't swallow it
- Don't rinse the mouth after brushing
- Children with braces should brush their teeth gently after every meal, to clean away loose food and plaque from around brackets and wires
- From 18 months to six years of age, children should brush with a pea-size amount of low-fluoride children's toothpaste
- Parents/carers should supervise brushing until children are eight years old
- If you're on tank water or your town does not have fluoridated tap water, children should use adult-strength toothpaste. Talk to your dentist about when to start and how much to use.

How to floss

- Floss every day to remove plaque and food particles from between your teeth
- Flossing should begin as soon as children have a full set of baby teeth
- Until children are 10 years old, parents/carers should floss their teeth for them
- Wind about 45cm of floss around your middle fingers, and rest it across your thumbs and index fingers
- Slide the floss between your teeth with gentle up-and-down/back-and-forth motions, to avoid damaging the gums
- Use a clean segment of floss for each tooth
- To clean the tooth at the point where it meets the gum, curl the floss and insert it gently under the gum.

Make good choices

- Drink tap water, it's sugar-free, and it contains fluoride, which protects teeth against decay
- Choose healthy options like fresh fruit, cheese, plain yoghurt and raw vegetables
- Avoid sugary foods like lollies, sweet biscuits, flavoured yoghurts and muesli bars
- Avoid sticky foods like lollies and dried fruit.



Medicare-funded dental treatment for children

If your family receives Family Tax Benefit Part A or certain other government payments, your child may be eligible for Medicare-funded treatment under the Child Dental Benefits Schedule.

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