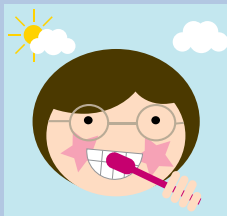


# Top Tips...

## for looking after your children's teeth

### brush twice a day and replace your brush regularly

- Your child's teeth start to appear anytime from 6 months onwards. As soon as they appear it's important to start brushing teeth every morning and bedtime.
- Choose a toothbrush with a small head and soft bristles. Use just a smear, if under two years, or a pea-sized (two years and over) amount of fluoride toothpaste (1000ppm is recommended). Children's toothpaste is milder in taste but may have a lower level of fluoride.
- Replace toothbrushes every 3 months or as soon as the bristles show signs of wear.



- Your child shouldn't swallow the toothpaste, but should be encouraged to spit it out when finished brushing. Don't rinse with water - let the toothpaste do its job.
- You should brush your children's teeth for them until they are 7 or 8 years old and then supervise them when they do it themselves.
- Ask your dentist, hygienist or health visitor to show you how to brush.

### visit your dentist regularly

- The earlier you take your child to the dentist the better. Waiting until your child needs treatment will not be a good first experience.
- You may find it helpful to take your child on a family dental appointment, to sit on your knee. This is only helpful if you do not have a fear of the dentist yourself!
- Many dentists will see children once their first tooth appears. For help to access NHS dental services in Grampian call the

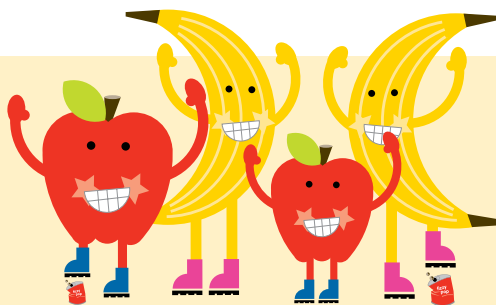


Dental and Information Advice Line (DIAL) on 0845 45 65 990, open 8.15am-5.45pm, Monday-Friday.

- NHS dental services are free for children, either from a family dentist (General Dental Practitioner) or the Community Dental Service.

## stamp out fizzy drinks and eat healthier snacks

- Milk and water are the only safe drinks for teeth.
- Stamp out or cut down on fizzy drinks (even diet varieties). Limit them to mealtimes only and use a straw.
- Introduce your baby to a feeder cup as soon as possible. Try to have your baby off bottles by the age of one year.
- If you give your child fresh or diluting juices, make sure that they are very well diluted - at least 10 parts water to one part juice. Serve at mealtimes only.
- Never give your child sugary drinks in a bottle or cup to hold onto for long periods of time e.g. in their pram or at bedtime. This can quickly decay teeth.
- Don't add sugar to foods you prepare for your child. Sweet foods and drinks encourage a "sweet tooth".



- If you buy ready-prepared foods, read the labels and watch out for sugar.
- Sugar can have different names e.g. sucrose, glucose, dextrose, maltose, honey, syrup are a few. The higher up it is in the list of ingredients, the more of it there is in the food.
- It's not just the amount of sugar that we eat that is a problem, but how often and when we eat it.
- If you are going to give your child sweet foods and drinks keep them to mealtimes only.
- Healthier snacks for teeth include fruit, carrot sticks, sandwiches, breadsticks or toast.

3

## choose sugar-free medicine for a healthy smile



- If your child is given a prescription or you are buying medicines over the counter, ask if a sugar-free version is available.
- If the medicine contains sugar and is to be taken before bedtime, brush your child's teeth afterwards.

4

For more information about looking after your child's teeth visit the Childsmile website: [www.child-smile.org](http://www.child-smile.org)

or call the free healthline on:  
**0500 20 20 30**

This publication is also available in large print and on computer disk. Other formats and languages can be supplied on request. Please call Resources on (01224) 558638 or email: [gramplan.resources@nhs.net](mailto:gramplan.resources@nhs.net)

Ask for publication CGD 100419