



Brush Up on Healthy Teeth

1. Establish and stick to a “toothbrushing routine” every day. Brush your child’s teeth for 2 minutes twice a day until she has the skill to handle the toothbrush alone. Continue to supervise brushing to make sure your child is doing a thorough job and using a small amount of toothpaste.

2. Use the right amount of fluoride toothpaste. Fluoride is important for fighting cavities. But if children younger than 6 years old swallow too much fluoride, their permanent teeth may have white spots. To keep this from happening, use only a pea-sized amount of toothpaste, and teach your child to spit out the toothpaste and rinse well after brushing.

3. Make toothbrushing fun! Take your child to the store and let him pick out a toothbrush in his favourite color or with his favourite character. Toothbrushes should be replaced every 3 to 4 months.

4. Flossing before brushing will loosen the plaque and food particles that will be removed by brushing. Floss anywhere the teeth are touching, though doing it all over is a good way to get your child used to the practice. Try big-handled flossers in a kid-friendly theme; they can be a good motivator for your child.

5. Encourage good nutrition. The foods we eat are just as important for keeping our teeth healthy as they are keeping our bodies healthy. If your child is hungry for a snack, choose foods like fruit, cheese, yogurt, or raw vegetables. Try to limit frequent sweets and sugary snacks, including high sugar sodas. Sugar is one of the main causes of dental problems.

6. Regular dental check-ups are an important part of oral health. How often your child goes for a check-up depends on her oral health needs. The goal is to catch small problems early. For many children, this means a dental exam every six months.