

TOOTHFULLY. *speaking*



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BACK TO SCHOOL

Ahhh! Back to school! Now that the kids are settled in their classes, you want to ensure they are making healthy choices when it comes to lunch especially if they are teenagers and making their own lunches. However, one aspect you may not have considered

when it comes to lunch options is dental health.

All ages are at risk of developing cavities especially if they don't practice healthy dental habits, but dental cavities are still prevalent in our childhood/teen population.

Simple healthy tips promote good dental habits in children:

1. Get to bed on time: Scientists have proven that lack of sleep forces poor nutritional choices upon waking fatigued - the challenge for parents continues, especially with teenagers whose circadian sleep rhythms are reversing - preparing smoothies or a homemade breakfast sandwich for on the run late mornings is easy in the long run

2. Eat healthy foods at home: A healthy diet won't just improve your child's growth and physical health but also improve their dental health. Natural foods such as fruits, contain less sugar and aren't as damaging to the teeth because they are not unnaturally "sticky". We all aim to serve a balanced diet, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy products and protein at home and the suggestion is to just NOT buy junk foods for "snacks" as a food alternative

3. Pack fruits, veggies and dairy: as mentioned natural foods cause less harm and following up with cheese at lunch which has natural casein and is also a natural cavity fighting food. Fruit will satisfy your child's sweet cravings and help them gain all the proper nutrients they need to grow healthy.

4. Never put sticky and sugary foods in the lunch bag: food that is sticky, crunchy or has added sugar promotes cavities," Candy or gummies are totally loaded with sugar and stick to the teeth which further enhances the tooth's exposure to cavity breakdown - contrasting to fruit's affects.

5. Be active in their dental care: take your child with you to your regular dental appointment or cleaning as soon as they have teeth - hygienists love to get kids going positively! - dental fear is deterred and dentistry starts positively - not only when things go wrong or are painful. Definitely brush your child's teeth until they don't let you..... this is contrary to what is advised. Kids take time to develop the motor skills to effectively brush and this is where we as parents must helicopter a bit!

6. Teenagers!: a recent Swedish study showed that people's circadian rhythms might have a greater impact on healthy teeth than one might assume. It was proven that young Swedes who regularly stayed up late had an almost four times higher risk of dental caries than did early risers. THIS APPLIES TO KIDS ON THE COMPUTER LATE NIGHTS AND SNACKING AFTER PARENTS HAVE GONE TO BED. These kids brushed their teeth less often and ate breakfast less regularly and thus were at high risk for caries.

So whether it's their first year at school or they're already climbing the ranks or a frustrating teenager - planning ahead with a list, shopping by the list and prepreparing the foods make it easier for parents and kids to keep on track! Eventually all these kids make better choices for nutrition as they mature!



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