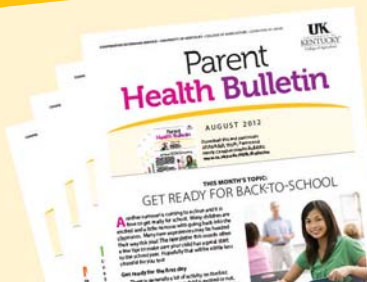


Parent Health Bulletin



FEBRUARY 2013

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: DENTAL HEALTH

There is nothing more precious than a child's smile. Making sure that children have healthy teeth and mouths is very important. Having healthy teeth will help children chew food, speak clearly and help them to look their best.

Having healthy teeth is important

After a person eats something, there are bacteria in the mouth that eat away at the sugar in the mouth. The bacteria turn the sugar into acid and can cause cavities. If the teeth are not properly cared for, it is likely that cavities will occur, causing a great deal of pain. If children have pain in their mouths, they may find it hard to eat or concentrate in school.



Continued on the back 



Make sure your child flosses his or her teeth. Flossing gets out the food bits that get stuck between the teeth.

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Tips for healthy teeth

- **Brush 2 times a day** — make sure your child brushes his or her teeth at least two times a day. The best times are after breakfast and right before bedtime. If possible brush again after lunch and after eating sugary snacks.
- **Brush ALL of the teeth** — make sure your child brushes all of his or her teeth. Often areas in the back and inside part of the teeth are missed. If possible have the dentist show your child the best way to brush his or her teeth.
- **Take the time to brush** — spending at least 2–3 minutes. It may be helpful to have a timer in the bathroom or have a song that can be sung while brushing that lasts about 2 minutes, to ensure that your child is spending enough time brushing.
- **Use a SOFT bristle toothbrush** — the package will tell you if the bristles are soft or medium. You should also replace a toothbrush at least every 3 months.
- **Flossing is important** — make sure your child flosses his or her teeth. Flossing gets out the food bits that get stuck between the teeth.
- **Visit a dentist regularly** — your child should visit a dentist at least two times a year (every 6 months). The dentist will check for cavities and signs of gum disease. During the dentist appointment, your child's teeth will be cleaned. This can be a time to learn more about how to take even better care of the teeth.

Make sure your child brushes all of his or her teeth. Often areas in the back and inside part of the teeth are missed.



You should replace a toothbrush at least every 3 months.

Making sure your child has a happy healthy smile is important. Take the time to make sure that your child is brushing and flossing correctly. If he or she is not, make sure your child learns so that he or she can have a beautiful smile for years and years to come.

SOURCE:

- Nemours Kidshealth. *Taking Care of Your Teeth*. October 2012 www.kidshealth.org
- American Dental Association <http://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/babies-and-kids/>

Parent
Health Bulletin

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