

HEALTHY FOOD HEALTHY TEETH

Having a healthy diet is not only important for our nutrition but also for our dental health. It is important to consider both aspects when choosing what to eat.

TOOTH DECAY IS PREVENTABLE

- **Brush teeth twice a day using a fluoride toothpaste**
- **Choose water or milk first**

Looking after teeth isn't just about brushing. The kinds of food we eat can affect acid levels in our mouths and cause decay. The more often your child eats sweet food and drinks – like lollies, cakes and biscuits, fruit juice and fizzy drinks – the more likely they are to get holes in their teeth.

If you give your child sweet foods and drinks, it is best to do so only occasionally (less than once a week) at meal times. Saliva is the body's natural defence against tooth decay- constantly replacing the minerals in teeth and washing away acids. To give saliva a chance to work, limit the number of times your child eats throughout the day.

- Eating three meals and two snacks each day is best
- Give teeth a rest from sugar
- Try to offer healthy snacks between meals

A GLASS OF SOMETHING

Get your child to drink a glass of water after having a sweet drink. Even though diet drinks (such as diet cola) do not contain sugar they are very acidic and they can cause erosion of your child's teeth. The best drinks for your child's teeth are water and milk. Save sweet drinks for meal times (if at all), and use a straw. Encourage your child to choose water – it's fresh and free!

TEETH FRIENDLY SNACKS

- Bread
- Cheese
- Raw vegetables
- Unsweetened and unsalted popcorn
- Nuts
- Yoghurt

Information from the Ministry of Health resource
'It's Easy to Protect Your Family's Smile'
For more information visit www.letstalkteeth.co.nz

Healthy Nibbles

Nutrition Updates for Primary Schools

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For more information visit: www.cph.co.nz

Canterbury

District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora o Waitaha