

Tooth brushing

Teeth should be brushed as soon as they appear in the mouth.

An ideal toothbrush should have a small head with soft/medium textured bristles.

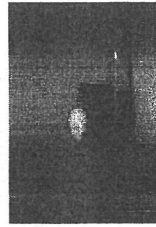
For children under three years of age use a smear of ordinary family fluoride toothpaste. For children over three years of age use a pea-sized blob.

See pictures below.

0-3 years



3+ years



Fluoride is important as it helps to make teeth stronger.

There is no fluoride in the local water supply.

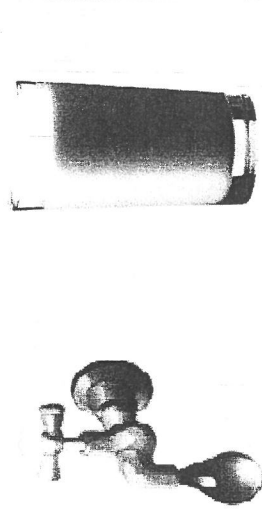
Brush teeth and gums last thing at night and one other time during the day.

Children need help with tooth brushing up to the age of seven to eight years.

Your child should spit out after brushing and not rinse. This helps the fluoride to work for longer on the teeth.

Drinks

Milk and plain water are the only safe drinks for healthy teeth.



All juices (fresh or cordial) - even the low or reduced sugar ones - can damage your child's teeth.

Sugar free, no added sugar, low sugar, fizzy and diet drinks are all very acidic and can harm teeth if given too often.

Children under four years of age should not have sugar free or diet drinks as artificial sweeteners are not recommended for young children.

Look out for: aspartame, saccharin and sorbitol as they are all artificial sweeteners.

Food

Sugar can cause tooth decay if given often to children **lots of times** during the day and at night.

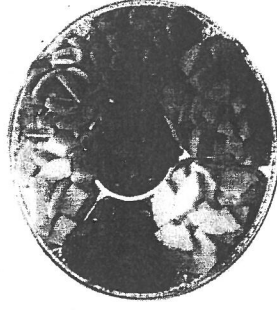
It is important to prevent tooth decay by cutting down **how often** your child has food and drinks with added sugar.

Keep sugary foods and drinks to mealtimes only.

Make sure that any foods are sugar free.

Fresh fruit, fresh vegetables, cheese, toast, plain rice cakes are healthier choices.

Dried fruits are very sticky and sugary and should be kept to mealtimes.



Do not use sweets as a reward for children; try stickers, stars or small toys.

Sugar is also known by the following names:

glucose, glucose syrup, fructose, sucrose, dextrose, honey, maltose.

Watch out for these hidden sugars!