



Snacks and healthy teeth

We all enjoy a snack, so it is a good idea to think of snacks as 'mini meals'. Make these foods part of the overall diet. Food and drinks low in sugar, reduces the risk of developing dental decay and other health problems.

Dental decay is a diet related disease

- Snacking often on sweet food and drinks between meals is a major cause of tooth decay. This is because there is little time between-meals for teeth to recover.
- Cutting down on sugary snacks and drinks and limiting them to mealtimes will reduce the risk of tooth decay.

Watch out for hidden sugars in snack foods

- Most of the sugars we eat are in processed foods and drinks.
- Check food labels for sugar including 'hidden' sugars such as glucose, sucrose, corn syrup and malt extract.
- The words "natural" or "nature" on the packaging doesn't always mean it's good for you.



Foods that are good for your teeth are also good for your body so...

- Choose healthy snacks e.g. vegetable sticks, natural yoghurt, plain popcorn, nuts, seeds, soup or cheese.
- Choose fresh fruit for valuable fibre, and other nutrients. Dried fruit are high in sugar (e.g. sultanas contain 73% sugar), are sticky and tend to cling to teeth. Dried fruit eaten often can lead to tooth decay just like lollies.
- Eat less processed foods and sugary drinks e.g. 'health bars', biscuits, cakes, chocolate, lollies, soft drinks etc. They contain high amounts of sugar and will stick to teeth readily.
- Cut down on added sugars including honey e.g. in baking as well as in cups of tea/coffee.

Tooth Tips

- Taste before you add and resist adding sugar to encourage fussy eaters.
- Encourage interest by including family members in preparing and cooking healthy foods.
- Drink tap (fluoridated) water and plain milk.
- Chew sugar free gum to increase saliva which helps to dilute acid.

For further information please discuss with your dental practitioner

Would you like more information or to provide feedback?

This document can be made available in alternative formats such as braille, audio tape or electronically on request.



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