

## Oral Health

- \* Brush your teeth with a fluoride toothpaste twice a day.
- \* Spit out the toothpaste afterwards, do **not** rinse with water or mouthwash.
- \* Avoid sugary snacks or drinks.
- \* Water is the best drink.
- \* Going to the dentist is important and the best time to start is once the first tooth erupts
- \* Wear a mouth guard when playing contact sports



### What is Tooth Decay?

Sugar causes dental decay. The sugar in food and drinks are used by bacteria in the mouth to make acids. These acids dissolve teeth resulting in decay (holes).

It is not the amount of sugar eaten, but how **often** it is eaten.

The mouth takes at least 1 hour to recover from sugar/acid attacks. This is why it is important to avoid snacking and keep any sugary foods or drinks to mealtimes **only**.



### Snacks and Drinks

Avoid snacking where possible by trying to ensure your child has 3 wholesome meals per day. 'Safe' snacks for teeth include:

- \* Cheese
- \* Raw vegetables
- \* Breadsticks
- \* Low fat plain crisps
- \* Crackers
- \* Savoury sandwiches

The only truly 'safe' drink is **water**. Plain milk (not milkshake) sugar can be drunk through the day but not overnight. Tea and coffee without sugar are okay.

### Which toothpaste?

Check that your toothpaste contains fluoride. The amount of fluoride will be in 'parts per million' (PPM) on the label. Younger children need lower amounts of fluoride:

**Children 0-3: 1000ppm** – smear amount of toothpaste

**Children 0-6: 1000ppm at least** – pea sized amount of toothpaste

**Children 7+ and adults: 1350ppm** or above

If you need this information visit <http://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/your-health/dental-health/>

To find a dentist: <http://www.nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx>