

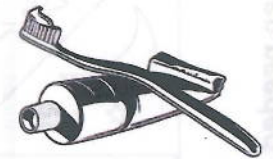
Today dental health presentations were given in your child's school. We discussed basic dental home care, plaque, the decay process, and nutrition. Oral health is important to overall health. To help you and your child to maintain a healthy mouth and a healthy body, please read...

Did you know...?

- ▶ The bacteria or germs that cause a tooth cavity can be given to a child from another person. The germs can be passed by sharing food, drinks, toothbrushes, forks or spoons, etc.
- ▶ Xylitol, mannitol and sorbitol are natural sweeteners made from the fibrous parts of plants. They can be found in chewing gum or mints. The germs that cause cavities cannot use this sweetener. These special chewing gum or mints stimulate salivary flow, reduce the acids made by plaque germs.
- ▶ Baby teeth are still needed to "hold the space" for the adult teeth to come into.
- ▶ Cavities that infect the teeth can cause the infection to spread to the mouth, gum, throat, sinus and even the brain in rare cases!
- ▶ Dental sealants can help provide additional protection against cavities on the chewing surface of permanent six and twelve year molars.

Tooth brushing and flossing

- ▶ Your child may need to have a friendly reminder to brush and floss each night before bed.
- ▶ It is important to have the toothbrush bristles focus along the gums because this is where most plaque builds up.
- ▶ Brushing should be done at least twice a day, before bedtime being the most important brushing.
- ▶ Flossing should be done at least once a day between teeth that touch, with a gentle up and down motion.



Fluoride

- ▶ Fluoride strengthens the enamel of the tooth, making it more resistant to cavities.
- ▶ Children who can spit well, should use a toothpaste containing fluoride, and may use a mouth rinse containing fluoride after brushing, at bedtime.
(Look for the ADA seal when you buy a anti-cavity fluoride rinse.)



Nutrition

- ▶ Strive for 5 servings of fruit and vegetables every day. One serving is about the size of your fist.
- ▶ Sugary and starchy foods create acids that can cause tooth cavities.
- ▶ Try to drink water after each snack and meal to help rinse your mouth.
- ▶ Consuming an extra 100 calories daily for a year, without using them up, can lead to a weight gain of 10 pounds.

