

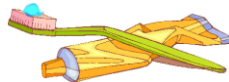
Teeth and gums need to have plaque removed every day to prevent tooth decay and gum disease. Plaque is a sticky invisible layer of germs that forms on teeth and gums within 24 hours. If it is not removed daily, it can cause tooth decay and gum disease.

Parents need to help their children learn how to take care of their teeth and gums. Suggestions to help your child are:

- Brush twice a day - in the morning and at bedtime. For young children, parents should supervise brushing. A thorough brushing takes two minutes.



- For children under age 3, use a rice-size amount of fluoride toothpaste. For children age 3 and older, use a pea-size amount of fluoride toothpaste. The toothpaste should be recognized by the Canadian Dental Association.



- Use a child-size, soft-bristled toothbrush. Remember toothbrushes should **never be shared**. This spreads disease including tooth decay.
- Replace toothbrushes every three months. If your child has been ill, use a new toothbrush when the child is better.
- Check occasionally to make sure that poor brushing habits have not crept in such as brushing too fast or too hard or missing tooth surfaces.

- Floss your child's teeth once a day. By age nine, most children will have the skill to floss on their own. Floss wands or holders can also be used to help with flossing.



- Eat nutritious foods and drink healthy beverages. Limit how often sweet snacks are offered, especially sticky sweets that cling to teeth. The best time to eat sweet foods is with a meal or at the end of a meal when they are less harmful to teeth. See *Canada's Food Guide* for more information.



- Around age 6 and 12, four 6-year molars and four 12-year molars will grow in at the back of your child's mouth. These are permanent teeth and are meant to last a lifetime. Ask your dentist to apply dental sealants to new permanent molar teeth. Dental sealants are clear, white, or colored plastic coatings applied to the chewing surfaces to prevent cavities.



- Have a dental check-up once a year. Dental visits should begin by age one.
- Families who receive Supplementary Health Benefits or Family Health Benefits cover the cost for routine dental services for children under 18 years of age.

(turn over)



Accountable



Collaborative



Common Goals



Dedicated



Evidence-Based Practice



Wellbeing

Brushing and Flossing Your Child's Teeth

Outside



Inside



Chewing Surfaces



Angle the brush towards your gums. Gently brush back and forth with short vibrating strokes on all sides of your teeth.



Wrap floss around middle fingers
(use about ½ metre or 18 inches)



Gently guide floss between teeth



Move floss gently between the
teeth and under the gums.
Move up and down. Move to the
next tooth.

For more information check the website at www.saskohc.ca