

Is snacking healthy

for my child's teeth?

Oral health for children

For between meal snacks, choose nutritious foods for your child to promote good dental and general health.

Sugary snack foods can lead to cavities

Plaque is a sticky, clear film that forms on our teeth every day. Plaque contains germs (bacteria) that stick to teeth. The sugar in food and drinks reacts with plaque to form an acid that eats away the hard outer layer (enamel). Over time, this acid will make a hole in the enamel creating a cavity or dental decay.



Making good snacking choices helps prevent dental decay

Eating healthy food is always a good choice for both dental health and general health.

- Choose nutritious, unsweetened snack foods.
- Read ingredient lists when choosing snacks. Molasses, honey, fructose, glucose and sucrose are all types of sugar.
- It is better to eat sweets at meal time and not as snacks. The increased saliva flow during a meal dilutes sugars and helps wash them away.
- Reduce the time that sweet food stays in contact with the teeth. Limit sugared drinks, chewing sugared gum or sucking on candy over long periods of time.
- After your child eats sweet, sticky foods, brush your child's teeth.
- When brushing is not possible, rinse the mouth with water or chew sugar-free gum.

Try these suggestions for healthy snack foods

cheese	fruit
melba toast	rice cakes
muffins	bagel and cheese
bread sticks	pita bread with cheese
cottage cheese	yogurt
nuts and seeds (for older children)	half sandwich (cheese, egg, ham, salmon, tuna)
pita bread with hummus	unsweetened fruit juice
vegetables	vegetable juice
milk	hard boiled eggs



***Brushing and flossing every day
helps prevent tooth decay!***

For more information contact:
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or your local public health unit

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Based on materials developed by the City of Ottawa,
People Services Department