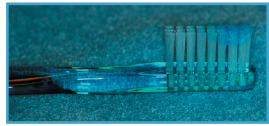


How Much

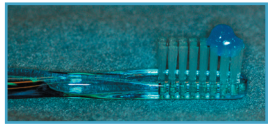
Toothpaste with Fluoride?

Juice?*



Under Age 3

Slight smear about the size of a grain of rice



Age 3 - 6

Pea-size amount

(Toothbrush images courtesy of Dr. Norman Tinanoff, University of Maryland School of Dentistry)

Spit, do not rinse, after brushing.



Under 6 months
No Juice



1 - 6 Years

4 to 6 ounces per day, BUT not as a pacifying drink



Older children and adolescents

8 - 12 ounces or 2 servings a day



Whole fruit is always preferred.

What Causes Cavities?

Bacteria (germs) cause cavities.

The germs that cause cavities spread easily from one family member to another.



Germs feed on sugars in sweetened drinks and foods to form acid. These germs are found in plaque.

Plaque is a sticky substance that forms on your teeth after eating. ("Fuzzy teeth" = plaque!) Acid in the plaque irritates the gums.



It makes them red and swollen. Acid attacks and weakens tooth enamel - the protective outer layer of a tooth.

Acid attacks last about 20 to 40 minutes. A new acid attack begins with every sip or bite of a sugary food or drink.



Frequent snacking or sipping means all day acid attacks.



Cavities form when acid eats a hole in tooth enamel.

Keep Teeth Healthy

Parents with good oral health are more likely to have healthy children with good oral health.

Brush after breakfast and before bedtime for 2 minutes. Use toothpaste that has fluoride.

Have regular dental checkups.

Limit snacks between meals.

Restrict sugary food and drinks to mealtime only.

Drink tap water if your community water system or private well has fluoride in it.



Office of Oral Health

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Larry Hogan, Governor | Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor | Van Mitchell, Secretary



OFFICE OF ORAL HEALTH

Prevention and Health Promotion Administration
Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene



201 W. Preston Street, 4th Fl.
Baltimore, MD 21201 410-767-5300
<http://phpa.dhmf.maryland.gov/oralhealth>
email: dhmf.oralhealth@maryland.gov

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02/2015

Oral Health and Your Young Child



Some healthy tips from Maryland's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Birth to 6 Months

6 Months to 1 Year

1 Year to 3 Years

3 Years to 6 Years

Baby teeth are important! Tooth decay causes infection and pain. A clean and germ-free mouth is a healthy place for teeth to grow.

Good dental health starts before the first tooth appears. After feedings, wipe your baby's gums with a clean damp washcloth.



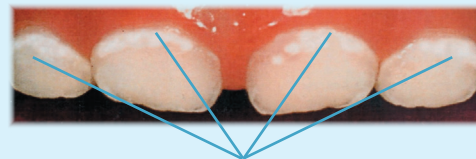
Brush your baby's teeth with fluoride toothpaste. Place a slight smear (about the size of a grain of rice) on the toothbrush. Brush after breakfast and before bed. Make brushing easier by putting your baby's head in your lap.



Put your baby to bed with hugs and love, not a bottle. Sleeping with a bottle of milk, formula, juice or any sugary drink can cause cavities.



Once a month, lift the lip. White or brown spots along the gum line may be signs that cavities are forming. Contact your baby's dentist or medical provider if you see anything unusual.



White spots along the gum line are the beginning of tooth decay. Visit the baby's medical doctor or dentist now and ask about fluoride varnish to help stop the decay process.

Schedule the first dental visit by the first birthday. If you do not yet have a dentist, ask your medical provider to check the baby's teeth. See a dentist if cavities are seen or suspected.



Wean your toddler off the bottle. Teach your toddler to drink from a regular cup or glass instead of a sippy cup.



Rethink the drink. Give your child milk or water. Limit the amount of 100% fruit juice to 4 - 6 ounces per day with meals. Avoid giving other sweetened drinks like soda, sports drinks and sweetened juices.



Brush your child's teeth twice a day with a small smear of toothpaste that has fluoride.

Ask about fluoride varnish. Fluoride varnish is a protective coating that is painted on teeth to help prevent new cavities and stop small cavities that are just starting.



Schedule dental checkups every six months.

Baby teeth are important! Baby teeth hold space for permanent teeth. All 20 baby teeth are usually in place by 3 years of age. Some baby teeth are meant to last until age 12!



Teach your child to brush. Use a pea-size amount of toothpaste with fluoride. Brush for 2 minutes, after breakfast and before bedtime. Spit, do not rinse, after brushing. Supervise brushing until age 7 - 8.



Eat well. Give healthy snacks like cheese, vegetable sticks or fresh fruit. Limit sweet treats to special occasions, not everyday.

Schedule dental checkups every six months.

Know your child's risk of getting cavities. Children with poor toothbrushing habits, who snack frequently on sugary foods and drinks, and who have family members with untreated cavities have the highest risk.