Show-Me Healthy Smiles for Healthy Life

Nutrition Tips for a Healthy Smile

• Drink water or low-fat milk and stay away from sugary drinks like soda.
• Don’t eat too much candy or desserts that are high in sugar and stick to your teeth.
• Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables to promote healthy gums and teeth.

Infants

• You can pass cavity-causing germs to your baby when you put baby’s spoon or pacifier in your mouth.
• Clean your newborn baby’s gums with a soft, clean, damp washcloth after every feeding, even if no teeth have come in yet.
• Baby begins cutting teeth at around six months old.
• Brush your baby’s teeth as soon as the first tooth comes in. Use a small, soft toothbrush and a “smear” of fluoride toothpaste.
• Your baby should have a dental exam by their first birthday.
• Don’t put juice, soda or any sweet drinks in baby’s bottle or sippy cup.
• Don’t put baby to bed with a bottle or sippy cup.
Children
• Brush your child’s teeth two times every day. For children less than five, use a ‘dab’ (smaller than a pea) of fluoride toothpaste.
• Floss your child’s teeth once a day.
• Replace toothbrushes three times a year.
• Check your child’s teeth every month for signs of problems (color changes, white spots, irritated gums).
• Take your child to a dentist at least once a year.

Women
• Gum disease can occur at anytime during pregnancy.
• Brush your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
• Floss at least once a day.
• Don’t smoke.
• See a dentist at least once a year.
• Have any tooth decay or gum disease treated so you do not pass it on to your baby.

Your child depends on you for a healthy smile!

<health.mo.gov/oralhealth>

Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
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