Tooth tips

- Foods like 'health bars', dried fruits and honey are not recommended as regular snacks. They contain high concentrations of natural sugars and will stick to the teeth more readily.
- Resist adding sugar to encourage fussy eaters. Continue to offer only healthy foods and drinks.
- There are times when it is tempting to offer sweets – far better to reward or comfort with a cuddle or a smile.

Children growing up today can maintain healthy teeth for a lifetime. With daily toothbrushing, good nutrition and regular dental visits, tooth decay can be prevented.



Contact Dental Health Services for further information on (08) 9313 0555

Alternatively visit www.dental.wa.gov.au

Your feedback is important to us. If you would like to provide feedback about this publication please email publications@dental.health.wa.gov.au or write to Communications Officer, Dental Health Services, Locked Bag 15, Bentley Delivery Centre WA 6983.

CONSUMER REVIEWED

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.

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Government of **Western Australia**
North Metropolitan Health Service
Dental Health Services

Snacks and Healthy Teeth

Foods that are good for the teeth are good for the body. Establish healthy eating habits and daily dental care from an early age.



HealthyWA

Snacks are a normal part of many children's diets and should be chosen carefully.



Children are often hungry when they ask for snacks, so it is a good idea to consider snacks as 'mini meals' rather than treats, and to make these foods a valuable part of the overall diet.

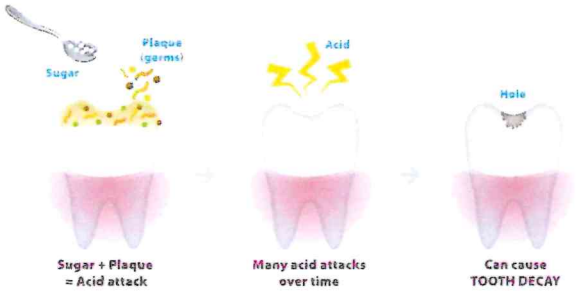
The Australian dietary guidelines recommend that we eat only moderate amounts of sugar, and foods containing added sugars. A diet low in sugar reduces the risk of becoming overweight and developing tooth decay.

Most of the sugar we consume is in processed foods and drinks. These often contain added sugars which are not always easy to identify. Before buying, check food labels for 'hidden' sugars such as corn syrup and malt extract.

Why worry?

Sugar in our diet is a major contributing factor to tooth decay.

How?



Too much sugar too often can lead to TOOTH DECAY

What can you do?

Offer only nutritious foods and vary the selection. Make snacks fun to eat. For example, arrange small pieces of fruit in the shape of a face or an animal.

Some healthy snack ideas



More healthy snack ideas



What about drinks?



Fresh, cool water is the best and cheapest way to quench a thirst. Water has no added flavour, colours, sugar or kilojoules. Plus it goes with all types of food, and leaves no sticky mess. Have cold tap water available at all times instead of sweetened drinks. Add frozen fruit, fun-shaped ice blocks or use a favourite cup to make tap water more interesting.

Drinks such as fruit juice, soft drinks, sport and energy drinks are all high in sugar, kilojoules, and are acidic. So make these occasional drinks.

Plain milk is another good option; but because it is a food, consume in moderation as a thirst quencher.

Drink tap water instead of sweetened, acidic drinks to help prevent dental and other health problems. The fluoride in tap water helps to protect and strengthen teeth.