

Looking after your child's teeth

A regular teeth-cleaning routine is essential for good dental health. Follow these tips and you can help keep your child free from gum disease and tooth decay.

Brush correctly

- An adult needs to help small children brush their teeth.
- You should brush your teeth and gums for two minutes, twice a day.
- A small soft tooth brush is best
- When brushing your teeth, make sure you brush the insides, the outsides, all the biting surfaces and the tongue.
- You only need a small amount of toothpaste.
- After brushing spit the toothpaste out but don't wash it away with water. The fluoride needs to stay on your teeth to help protect them from decay.

Take care of your teeth

- Sugar in fizzy drinks and sweets is bad for your teeth and causes decay
- Have sugary foods and drinks at mealtimes only
- Choose healthy snacks and drinks between meals (like fruit, bread, milk or water)
- Visit your dentist at least once a year.

Find an NHS Dentist

- Call 111 (there is an interpreter service) and they will help you find a dentist.
- If you have a dental emergency (like a swollen face or toothache) call 111 and they will advise you.
- Remember, once you have found an NHS dentist, always keep your appointments - or you may have to find another dentist.

Do I have to pay?

- If you receive an income support benefit payment (like tax credits, income based Job seekers allowance) you may be entitled to free dental care. Ask your dentist about this.
- Dental care is free for: All children and young people in full time education, and women who are pregnant and for 12 months after the birth.

Remember, the top three things you can do to look after your teeth:

1. Brush your teeth twice a day with a family fluoride toothpaste
2. Don't eat and drink sugary sweets and fizzy drinks between meals.
3. Visit a dentist every 12 months