

Tooth Talk

“Hey Doc, which food should I feed my kids with so that they can have good, strong teeth?”

A child’s diet has a direct effect on his or her oral health. There are many healthy, nutrient-rich foods and drinks that can help kids maintain good oral and overall health. Foods that are rich in vitamins and minerals can help kids’ teeth stay healthy and strong.

Calcium- Teeth and jaws are made of calcium and they need it to stay healthy. Not enough calcium intake can lead to gum disease and tooth decay. Foods that contain lots of calcium include milk, yogurt, cheese, greens such as spinach, kale, collards, and beans.

Iron- Iron helps improve a child’s brain development and fights against anemia. It also prevents tongue inflammation and sores that may develop inside the mouth. Iron-rich foods include red meat, beans, iron-fortified low-sugar cereal.

Vitamin C- Vitamin C is essential for wound and cut healing. Insufficient intake of Vit C can lead to gum bleeding. Provide your children with fresh fruits and vegetables such as oranges, strawberries, broccoli, sweet potatoes, red peppers will ensure that they have adequate intake of Vit C.

There are a few foods and drinks that your children should avoid or keep to the minimum because they have harmful effects on their oral health.

Sugar- Too much sugary snacks can lead to tooth decay(cavity). Cookies, cakes, candy, gum, sport drinks, fruit juices should be avoided or consumed occasionally.

Carbohydrates- Foods high in carbohydrates can cause bacteria which produces acid to stay on the teeth, causing decay. Therefore, foods such as chips, bread, pasta, crackers, pretzels should be avoided or consumed in moderation

Carbonated drinks- Both regular and diet sodas wear away the enamel on the teeth, causing them to become weak and prone to staining and decay. Milk and water are much preferred over carbonated drinks.

It can be challenging to have kids consume foods that are good for their oral health and have them avoid foods that are bad for their teeth. Starting early is the best way to ensure that your kids have great oral and overall health.



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