

ORAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN

ST HELENS WELLBEING

 Family Hub



TOOTHBRUSHING

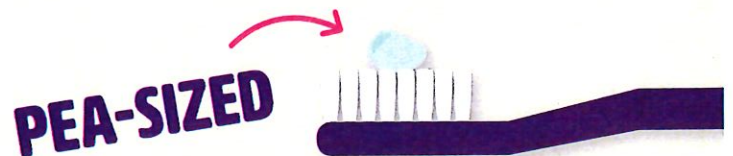
- Teeth should be brushed as soon as they appear in the mouth.
- An ideal toothbrush should have a small head with soft/medium textured bristles.
- There is no fluoride in the local water supply.
- For children under 3, use a smear of ordinary family fluoride toothpaste (1350-1500 ppm). Fluoride helps to make teeth stronger.



SUGAR FREE MEDICINES

- Always ask for sugar free medicines for your child and check with the doctor if they need a prescription.
- If they contain sugar, they can cause tooth decay.
- Medicines are often given at intervals during the day and may be given at night.

- For children over 3, use a pea-sized blob.



- Brush teeth and gums last thing at night before bed and one other time during the day – ideally for 2 minutes.
- Children need help with toothbrushing up to the age of 7.
- Your child should spit out after brushing and not rinse. This helps the fluoride to work for longer on the teeth.

VISITING THE DENTIST

- Your child should visit the dentist to have regular check ups.
- Take your child as often as the dentist recommends.
- In agreement with national guidelines, dentists offer fluoride varnish applications 2 – 3 time per year to every child and young person aged 3 – 16 years.
- A list of local dental practices is available from <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist>



FOOD

- Sugar will cause tooth decay if eaten often during the day and at night.
- It is important to cut down how often your child has food or drinks with sugar added.
- Keep sugary food and drinks to mealtimes only.
- Make sure that any foods given are sugar free. Fresh fruit, cheese, toast and plain rice cakes are healthier choices.
- Dried fruits are very sugary and sticky and should be kept to mealtimes.
- Always check food labels as sugar hides in so many foods.
- Sugar is also known by the following names: Sucrose, Glucose, Maltose, Fructose, Dextrose, Syrup and Honey.

DRINKS

- Milk and plain water are the only safe drinks for healthy teeth.
- All juices (fresh or cordial) - even the low or reduced sugar ones – can damage your child's teeth.
- Fizzy and diet drinks are all very acidic and can harm teeth if given too often.
- Children under 4 should not have sugar free or diet drinks as artificial sweeteners are not recommended for young children.
- Look out for Aspartame, Saccharin and Sorbitol as they are all artificial sweeteners.

REMEMBER

Watch out for hidden sugars!

REMEMBER TO...

- ✓ Brush teeth last thing at night before bed and one other time during the day.
- ✓ Choose milk and plain water.
- ✓ Always choose sugar free medicines.
- ✓ Reduce the amount of sugary foods and drinks given in a day and keep them to mealtimes.
- ✓ Visit the dentist regularly.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT
FAMILY HUB
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ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL