

Sugar & children's oral health

What causes tooth decay?

Tooth decay is caused by the bacteria in the mouth breaking down sugar in foods and drinks. The more often we eat sugary foods, the more at risk we are.

Good oral health for children is vital: not just because teeth are needed for chewing food, but also for speaking and smiling!

Babies' first teeth are very important: good eating habits early on will help your child to have healthy teeth later on.

It's essential to think about what you and your family are eating and make sure your diet is balanced: the key is to avoid sugary snacks, as this will help protect your teeth from decay.

If you do occasionally consume sugary food and drinks, confine them to mealtimes as this helps to limit the damaging effect on your teeth. And look out for hidden sugars too.

ORAL HEALTH

Top Tips

- 1 Reduce sugary snacks
- 2 Brush twice a day
- 3 Use a fluoride toothpaste
- 4 Visit the dentist on a regular basis

Did you know?

Around one in eight children admits to drinking sugary drinks at least four times a day.



Raisins stick to teeth and have a high sugar content, which can cause decay.



A 300ml can of cola contains around 10 teaspoons of sugar.



300ml of orange juice has around 7 and a half teaspoons of sugar.



A 15ml serving of ketchup has around one teaspoon.



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Unreported erosion epidemic

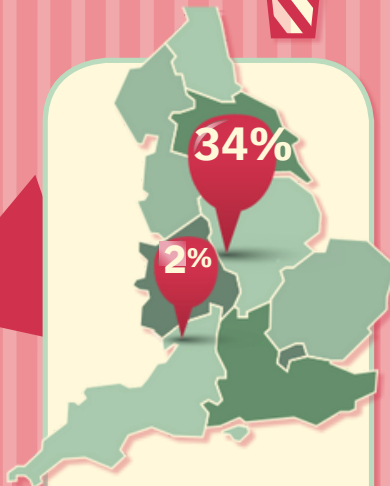
60 per cent of 12-year old children show evidence of tooth erosion

700g
of sugar

Britons eat around 700g of sugar a week: that's an average of 140 teaspoons per person.

140

The NHS spent £30 million on hospital-based tooth extractions for children aged 18 years and under in 2012-13.



Dental caries is the number one reason why children aged 5 to 9 are admitted to hospital in England. The variation is particularly dramatic among 3-year olds, with approximately 34 per cent suffering in Leicester, compared with just 2 per cent in south Gloucestershire.

three
in 10



one
in two

Across the UK, three in 10 five-year olds have visible signs of decay and by the time they reach 15, this increases to nearly one in two.

Oral health top tips:

1. Reduce sugar intake
2. Brush regularly
3. Don't miss your check-ups
4. Put a lid on unhealthy snacks
5. Watch out for 'hidden' sugars

