

Oral Health for Teens

Week 7

Introduction

The following information covers:

- Gum disease
- Tooth decay
- Tooth erosion
- Safe snacks
- Mouthguards
- Braces
- Smoking and Alcoholic drinks
- Illegal drugs
- Mouth piercing and tooth jewellery

Why is a healthy mouth important?



A healthy mouth is important for eating, speaking and socialising

A healthy mouth makes you feel more confident and good about yourself when building relationships with others

What happens if you don't look after your teeth and gums

- Gum disease
- Bad breath
- Tooth
- Pain
- Dental erosion
- Stained teeth



A 14-year-old teenager with tooth decay

Gum Disease



Not brushing your teeth and gums will cause the plaque bacteria to build in your mouth

Your breath will also smell and other people may notice, but you might not

Brushing your teeth and gums every day will help to prevent gum disease and stop bad breath

Brushing

- Brush your teeth at least twice a day (at night and one other time in the day)
- Use a toothpaste containing 1450 ppm (Parts Per Million Fluoride)
- Use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste
- Brush for 2 minutes
- Spit out the toothpaste after brushing but don't rinse your mouth, as the fluoride will help to protect your teeth



Tooth Decay



If you snack on sugary food and drinks throughout the day and at night, you are likely to develop tooth decay



Keeping sugary food and drinks to mealtimes only will help to prevent tooth decay

Dental Erosion

Dental erosion is caused by acid attacking the tooth enamel

The acid in fizzy drinks, fruit juices and some foods will damage the enamel and teeth will become discoloured and sensitive

Milk and plain water are safer drinks for teeth

Keep fizzy drinks, fruit juices and acidic foods to mealtimes only



Safe Snacks for Teeth



- Fresh fruit
- Vegetables
- Plain rice cakes
- Breadsticks
- Cheese
- Plain yoghurt
- Plain bagels

Cereal Bars and dried fruits contain a lot of sugar and are best kept to mealtimes

Mouthguards

Mouthguards help to protect the lips, teeth, jaw, tongue and cheeks from injury

You should always wear a mouthguard when playing any kind of contact sport

Ask your dentist about getting a mouthguard made

You can also buy one from a sports shop



Braces



Orthodontic appliances (braces) are designed to straighten teeth

There are many different types of braces; fixed and removable

Your dentist or orthodontist will be able to advise you about the type of brace that is most suitable for you

The length of time you have to wear a brace varies from a few months to around 2 years

Your dental team will be able to offer any advice

Smoking and Alcoholic Drinks

Smoking can cause gum disease, tooth loss, staining on teeth, bad breath and mouth cancer

Save your smile and **don't smoke**

Alcoholic drinks contain lots of sugar and can cause tooth decay and tooth erosion

Energy drinks also contain a lot of sugar and will damage teeth if you have them too often



Illegal drugs



Illegal drug use are linked to a range of health problems.

Smoking cannabis can have the same effect on the mouth as smoking cigarettes

People who use illegal drugs sometimes mix the drugs with other chemicals as well as sugar which increases the risk of tooth decay

Teeth usually become so painful that they have to be taken out by a dentist

Mouth piercings and tooth jewellery

Piercings and tooth jewellery can cause:

- Infection
- Inflammation and swelling of the mouth, lips and tongue
- Tongue studs cause chipped or broken teeth
- Difficulty with talking, eating and swallowing
- Dental treatment can be difficult for the dentist

Make sure you keep your mouth clean, especially the area around the piercing or jewellery



Top Tips for Teeth



- Brush your teeth last thing at night and one other time during the day
- Use a toothbrush with a small to medium sized head with soft bristles
- Use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste containing 1350ppm to 1450ppm fluoride
- Brush for 2 minutes
- Spit out the toothpaste after brushing, but don't rinse your mouth
- Keep sugary food and drinks to mealtimes
- Visit the dentist regularly

Further Resources

This is a free 8-week email programme that encourages families to eat better and move more, with budget conscious, easy and practical ideas.

www.healthysteps.uk



Thank You