Children's Dental Health

Why is good dental health important for kids?

Cavities (tooth decay) are the most common chronic disease found in children. Left untreated, they can cause pain and infections that make it hard to eat, talk, play, and learn. Cavities are easily preventable with good dental hygiene and healthy habits. Teaching these to kids early gives them the best chance at a healthy mouth and smile throughout their life!

What is fluoride and why is important for teeth?

Fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral and has health benefits when consumed in safe amounts - just like calcium! Fluoride rebuilds the enamel (outer layer) of teeth, making them stronger. Fluoride also makes it harder for bacteria to produce acid, which can help slow or prevent cavities. Using toothpaste with fluoride and drinking from a fluoridated water system (such as drinking from the tap) are key to preventing cavities.

How can I improve my child's dental health?

- Brush their teeth twice a day with fluoridated toothpaste (ages 3+) and floss daily.
- Help your child brush their teeth until they've developed good brushing skills.
- If your child is younger than 6 years, watch them brush. Make sure they use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste and always spit it out rather than swallow.
- Schedule regular dental check-ups.
- Drink tap water that contains fluoride.
- Ask your child's dentist to apply fluoride varnish and dental sealant when age appropriate.

For more information: cdc.gov/oral-health/prevention/oral-health-tips-for-children.html

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