

Love that Smile!

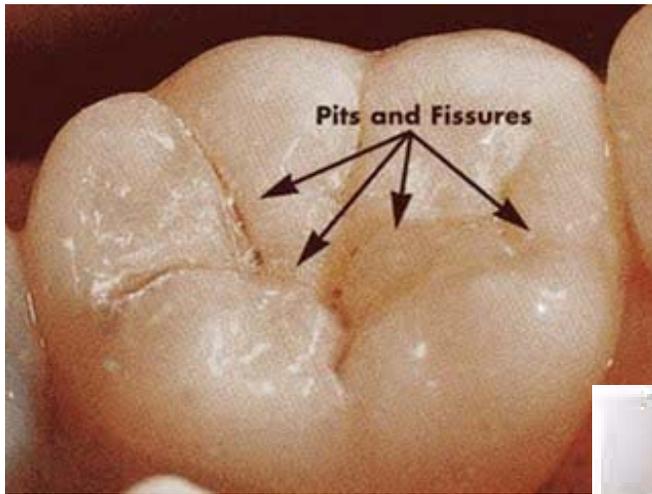


**Proven Ways
to Prevent
Tooth Decay**



Sealants

- ◆ **Sealants are thin, plastic coatings placed on the chewing surfaces of the back teeth.**
- ◆ **Sealants are put on in dentists' offices, clinics and schools.**
- ◆ **Getting sealants put on is quick, simple and painless.**



Toothbrush bristles are too large to clean out grooves (also called pits and fissures) in most teeth. Cavities can develop in these grooves.



Dental sealants can be used to cover the grooves in teeth to keep out food and germs to prevent cavities from forming.



Groove in tooth



Application of sealant to tooth



Groove in tooth is filled with sealant

Fluoride is a natural element found in rocks and soil, in fresh water, and in ocean water.



Fluoride is not usually found in bottled drinking water. Read the label!

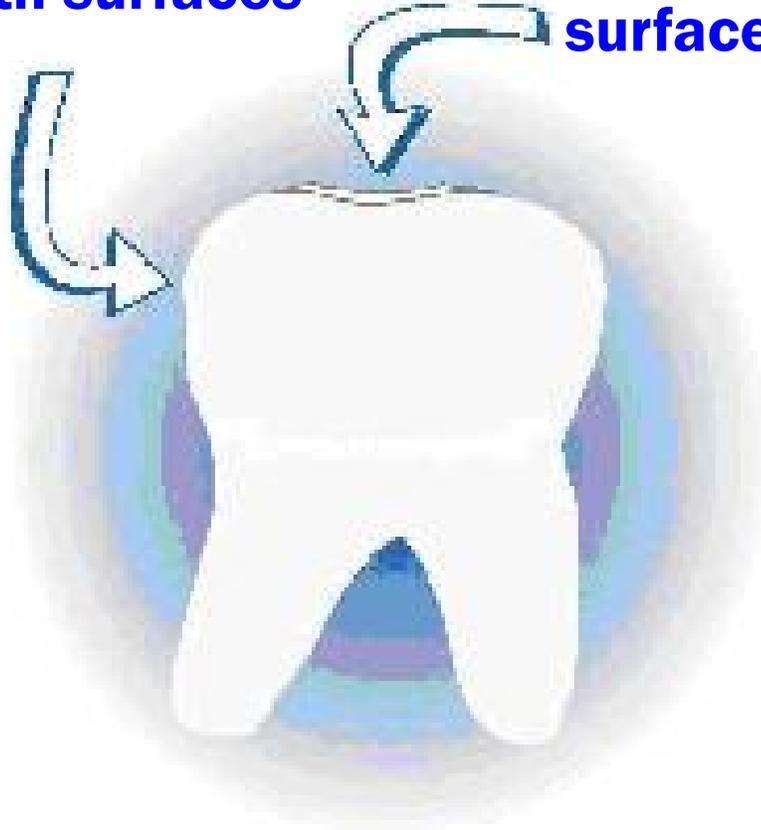


Fluoride

- ◆ **Makes teeth more resistant to decay**
- ◆ **Repairs tiny areas of decay before they become big cavities**
- ◆ **Makes germs in the mouth less able to cause decay**

**Fluoride
protects the
smooth surfaces**

**Sealants protect
the chewing
surfaces**



**Sealants are
painted on as a
liquid and quickly
harden to form a
shield over the
tooth.**

Fluoride prevents, reduces and even reverses the onset of tooth decay.

Ask your dentist about fluoride varnish.

- ◆ It is painted on teeth and brushed off the next day.
- ◆ Varnish is safe for young children and adults.



Drink water that has fluoride.



- ◆ More than 70 years of evidence supports the effectiveness of fluoridated water in fighting tooth decay.
- ◆ Many of Maryland's city water systems have fluoride.
- ◆ Drink fluoridated tap water instead of bottled water. It's less expensive, good for the environment and good for your health!



Flossing Tips

- ◆ **Prethreaded flossers are helpful for young children learning how to floss or for those who have trouble with arm movement.**
- ◆ **All types of floss are acceptable: flavored or unflavored, wide or regular, waxed or unwaxed.**

Children should never floss without an adult's help. Ask the dentist or dental hygienist to teach you at your next checkup.

Prevent Gum Disease: Floss Daily!



- ◆ **Wrap about 18 inches of floss around the middle fingers.**

- ◆ **Slide the floss between the teeth. (Do not snap the floss into the gums but guide the floss gently just below the gumline).**



- ◆ **As the floss reaches the gum line, make a C-shape around the tooth until you feel pressure against your tooth.**



- ◆ **Gently scrape the tooth surface with the floss.**
- ◆ **Move the floss as it becomes soiled and repeat the process for each tooth.**

Prevent Cavities: Brush! 2 Minutes, At Least 2x a Day!



- ◆ Place the toothbrush against the gum line at a 45-degree angle. Use a small circular motion to brush your teeth.
- ◆ Brush back and forth on the chewing surfaces of your teeth holding the brush flat. Do not forget the back of your teeth.
- ◆ Brush your tongue! This will freshen your breath and remove germs.
- ◆ Brush at least 2 times a day for at least 2-3 minutes.
- ◆ Brush at bedtime to remove bacteria that can cause decay while you are sleeping.

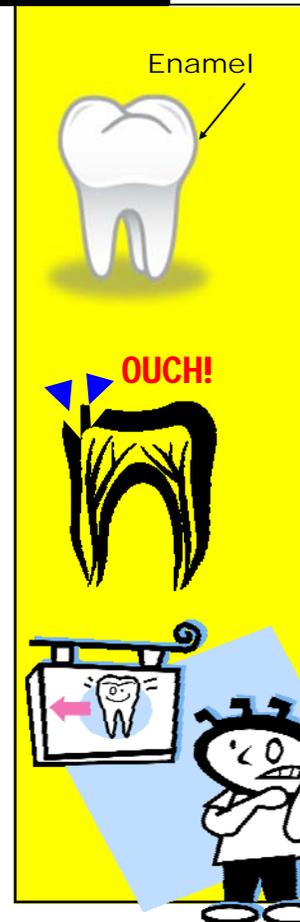
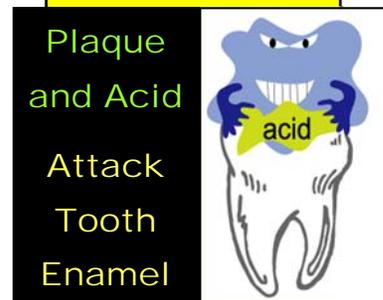
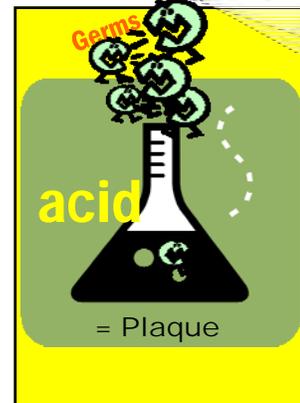
Brushing Tips



- ◆ Always use a soft bristle brush
- ◆ Replace your toothbrush every three months
- ◆ Never share toothbrushes, it spreads germs
- ◆ Children at high risk for tooth decay should use toothpaste that has fluoride as soon as possible.

What Causes a Cavity?

- ◆ Sugar feeds the germs that cause tooth decay.
- ◆ The germs make plaque (plak).
- ◆ Plaque is a sticky, smelly substance that forms on teeth after eating. (Fuzzy teeth = plaque!)
- ◆ Regular brushing and flossing remove plaque.
- ◆ Plaque makes acid which attacks tooth enamel, the hard outer layer that protects the tooth.
- ◆ Frequent acid attacks weaken tooth enamel and create a hole — a cavity!
- ◆ The tooth hurts when the cavity grows bigger and gets closer to the tooth nerve.
- ◆ See a dentist to stop the cavity from getting larger and repair the damage.



CAUTION

**DISAPPEARING
TOOTH ENAMEL!**

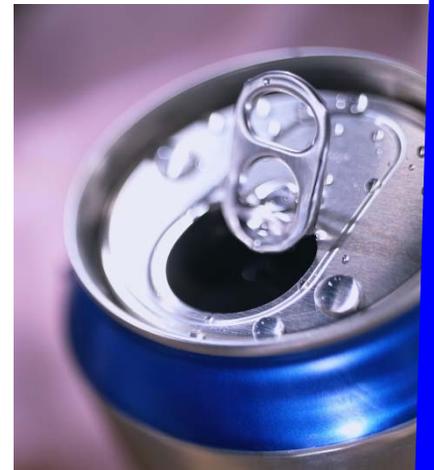


Acid & Sugar vs. Tooth Enamel



◆ Lemons and limes are very acidic. Sucking on them can slowly wear away tooth enamel, the outer layer that protects the tooth.

- ◆ Acids in soda, tea and juice wear away tooth enamel.
- ◆ Even diet or “sugar-free” soft drinks have acids that can harm your teeth.
- ◆ An acid attack usually lasts 20 to 40 minutes. Every sip starts a new acid attack.
- ◆ Sodas have no nutritional value except for sugar and calories.



Save Tooth Enamel...

- ◆ Eliminate highly acidic foods and drinks from your diet such as sodas, lemons, and other citrus fruits and juices.
- ◆ If you still eat or drink acidic foods and drinks, use a straw and when done, rinse your mouth with water.
- ◆ Acid softens tooth enamel. Wait at least 15 minutes before brushing with a soft bristle toothbrush.



The smaller
the acid number,
the **STRONGER** the acid!

	Acid*	Sugar**
	Low = Bad	Per 12 ounce Serving (1 can)
Pure Water	7.00	0.0 teaspoons
Barq's Root Beer	4.61	10.7 teaspoons
Diet 7UP	3.67	0.0 teaspoons
Apple Juice (13.5 oz.)	3.40***	10.3 teaspoons
Sprite	3.42	9.0 teaspoons
Diet Coke	3.39	0.0 teaspoons
Orange Juice	3.3 to 4.2***	8.5 teaspoons
Grape Minute Maid Soda	3.29	11.9 teaspoons
Mountain Dew	3.22	11.0 teaspoons
Fresca	3.20	0.0 teaspoons
Orange Slice	3.12	11.9 teaspoons
Diet Pepsi	3.05	0.0 teaspoons
Nestea	3.04	5.0 teaspoons
Gatorade	2.95	3.3 teaspoons
Dr. Pepper	2.92	9.5 teaspoons
Hawaiian Fruit Punch	2.82	10.2 teaspoons
Orange Minute Maid Soda	2.80	11.2 teaspoons
Coke Classic	2.53	9.3 teaspoons
Pepsi	2.49	9.8 teaspoons
Battery acid	1.00 (<i>ouch!</i>)	0.0 teaspoons

*Laboratory tests, University of Minnesota School of Dentistry, 2000.

**USDA: 4.2 grams = 1 teaspoons of sugar

*** *Drinks That Eat Teeth*, www.21st Century Dental.com, 09/30/2010.



Mouth Guards: Protecting Your Child's Teeth



Stock Mouth Guard

- ◆ Inexpensive, pre-formed, ready to wear
- ◆ Buy at sporting goods stores
- ◆ May not fit very well. May make breathing and talking difficult

Boil and Bite Mouth Guard

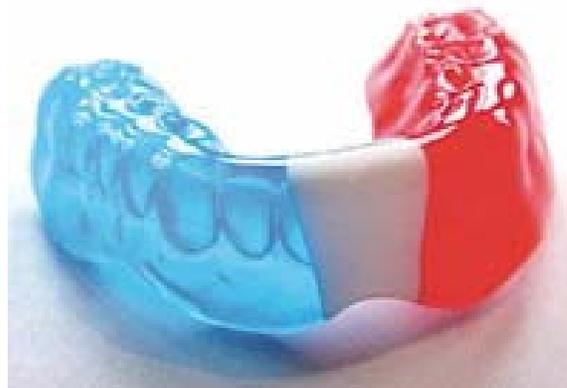
- ◆ Most commonly used type
- ◆ Buy at sporting goods stores
- ◆ Soften in water, then insert and allow to adapt to the shape of the mouth

Custom-Fitted Mouth Guards

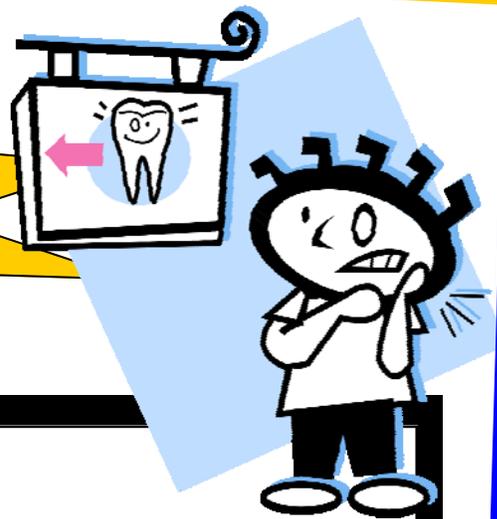
- ◆ Made by a dentist
- ◆ More expensive but best at preventing injury

**60 percent of facial
injuries occur during
sports practice.**

**Repairing a
broken tooth is
more expensive
than buying a
mouth guard.**



Permanent Tooth Knocked Out?



TIME IS CRITICAL!

- ◆ Take the child to the dentist **IMMEDIATELY**.
- ◆ Many times the tooth can be put back in and saved if this is done within **ONE HOUR**.
- ◆ Find the tooth. Hold it by the crown (top part).
- ◆ Gently rinse it off—do not clean or scrub it!
- ◆ Place tooth in a glass of milk or saline (whichever is available).
- ◆ If milk or saline are not available, place the tooth in plastic wrap, glass of water or wet towel.

In the United States, five million teeth are knocked out each year - mainly front teeth.

**Some tips for a healthy smile from your
Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene**



Martin O'Malley, Governor

Anthony G. Brown, Lieutenant Governor

Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D., Secretary

If you want to know more about keeping your child's teeth healthy, contact: