



Good Food, Healthy Teeth

Healthy food is good for your general health and your oral health. The nutrients that come from healthy foods help you to fight cavities and gum disease.

Sugars in food

Sugar is one of the main causes of oral health problems and is found in many foods. Foods high in sugar include soft drinks, chocolate bars, pastries and baked goods. Ingredients such as corn syrup, dextrose, fructose-glucose, honey, maple syrup, molasses and sucrose are all different types of sugars. Many healthy foods such as milk, dried fruit, bread, cereal and pasta also contain some sugars. The sugars found in healthy foods give our bodies the energy we need to live. The problem is that all of these sugars can cause cavities and other oral health problems.

How sugars cause cavities

Cavities begin with plaque. Plaque is an invisible film that occurs naturally in your mouth and sticks firmly to your teeth. It contains bacteria (germs) and forms on your teeth every day. These bacteria are quite normal and mostly harmless. They become a problem when the plaque is not cleaned from your teeth by brushing and flossing and are allowed to build up on and between your teeth. Here's how. When sugars in the foods that you eat mix with the bacteria in the plaque, this makes a mild acid. This acid forms in the plaque and it eats away at the hard outer layer of your tooth, called the enamel. Over time, the enamel gets soft and a cavity forms.