

Key points for preventing tooth decay and maintaining good oral health in children:

Children aged up to 6 years:

- From six months of age infants should be introduced to drinking from a free-flow cup
- From age one year feeding from a bottle should be discouraged
- Sugar should not be added to weaning foods or drinks
- Parents or carers should brush or supervise toothbrushing
- As soon as teeth erupt in the mouth, brush them twice daily with a fluoridated toothpaste
- Brush last thing at night and on one other occasion
- Use only a smear/small pea size of toothpaste
- Spit out after brushing and do not rinse, to maintain fluoride concentration levels around the teeth
- The frequency and amount of sugary food and drinks should be limited
- Avoid sugar containing foods and drinks especially at bedtime
- 'Sugar-free' medicines are preferable, if required
- Follow a healthy diet

Toothbrushing:

Brush the gumline and each tooth surface.

Use a small toothbrush head of medium texture and from 6 years upwards we recommend an electric toothbrush.

Thorough cleaning should take at least 2 minutes.

For ages 12-17 years we also recommend cleaning daily between the teeth, before brushing with dental floss or interdental brushes.

Pay particular attention around orthodontic appliances if you are wearing braces.

Toothbrushing is the key factor in the removal of plaque and the prevention of gum disease.

Toothpaste:

Toothpaste must contain Fluoride as it is this that prevents tooth decay. We would recommend a general adult toothpaste as suitable for all ages.

Supervision is recommended for children up to 7 years of age to make sure the correct amount of toothpaste is used and it is not licked, eaten or rinsed away.

Dietary advice to prevent dental decay:

Avoid high sugar foods and drinks especially at bedtime.

Sugars are broken down in the mouth by oral bacteria and turned in to acids. Acidity causes tooth surface demineralisation which if left unchecked will cause cavities to form.

Most processed and manufactured foods and drinks contain high levels of added sugar.

Check product labelling to find out how much sugar food and drinks contain.

If sugary foods are consumed for example dried fruit, fruit juices, it is better to consume it as part of a meal and not as a between-meal snack.



The Eatwell Guide: key messages

A balanced diet contains foods from all the five major food groups.

Fruit and Veg:

Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables. Aim for at least five portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day. Remember that fresh, frozen, canned, dried and juiced all count.

Dried fruit should be kept to meal times.

Limit fruit juice and smoothies to a combined total of 150ml per day and consume with meals.

Carbohydrates:

Eat plenty of starchy carbohydrates, including potatoes, bread, rice and pasta. Choose wholegrain varieties, or keep the skins on potatoes, for more fibre, vitamins and minerals.

Dairy:

Eat some dairy or dairy alternatives. Choose lower fat options when possible. For products like yoghurt, check the label and go for ones lower in fat and sugars.

Proteins:

Eat some beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins. Eat at least two portions of fish each week, one of which is oily. Limit processed meats such as sausages, bacon and cured meats.

Oils:

Oils and spreads, use these products sparingly as they are high in fat.

Foods high in fat, salt and sugar:

These foods are not required as part of a healthy, balanced diet. If included, they should only be consumed infrequently and in small amounts.

In addition, drink plenty of water every day.

The **Eatwell Guide** doesn't apply to children under two because they have different nutritional needs. Between the ages of two and five, children should gradually move to eating the same foods as the rest of the family.

Explore the interactive Eatwell Guide at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/the-eatwell-guide/>

Watch the following videos for more advice:

For 0 -3 year olds: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=owbp5F0K45c&feature=youtu.be>

For 3 - 6 year olds: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQE4xxk1r5g>

For 7+ year olds: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GHS27DHyl0>

And if your child needs more encouragement try this App: <https://www.brushdj.com/>

Eatwell Guide

Check the label on packaged foods

Each serving (100g) contains

Energy 1000kJ 200kcal	Fat 3.0g	Saturated 1.3g	Sugars 34g	Salt 0.6g
13%	4%	7%	50%	15%
	LOW	LOW	HIGH	MED

of an adult's reference intake
Typical values (as sold) per 100g, 100kJ/100kcal

Choose foods lower
in fat, salt and sugars

Use the Eatwell Guide to help you get a balance of healthier and more sustainable food. It shows how much of what you eat overall should come from each food group.



Water, lower fat milk, sugar-free drinks including tea and coffee all count.
Limit fruit juice and/or smoothies to a total of 150ml a day.

Eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day
Fruit and vegetables



Eat less often and in small amounts

Choose wholegrain or higher fibre versions with less added fat, salt and added sugars
Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates



Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins
Eat more beans and pulses. 2 portions of sustainably sourced fish per week, one of which is oily. Eat less red and processed meat



Dairy and alternatives
Choose lower fat and lower sugar options



Oil & spreads
Choose unsaturated oils and use in small amounts

Per day 2000kcal 2500kcal = ALL FOOD + ALL DRINKS