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Home Dental Care for Kids



Just because children's primary teeth eventually fall out doesn't mean that they can go without dental care. According to the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, children should see a dentist when their first tooth appears and no later than their first birthday. Babies with dental issues due to trauma, disease or a developmental abnormality should see a dentist immediately. And home dental care is just as important.

Start building good habits at home as your child's teeth start to grow in – between the ages of 6 months and 3 years old.

- Start brushing your child's teeth as soon as they grow in, and for the first 3-4 years or until the child is able to brush alone.
- Start flossing your child's teeth as soon as there are two or more teeth touching each other. Assist your child until he or she can floss alone.
- If your local water supply does not contain sufficient fluoride, your child may need fluoride supplements. Discuss this with your dentist.
- Do not put a child to bed with a bottle of juice. The sugar and acids can cause tooth decay. Nursing an infant to sleep is fine.

Consult your dentist with any questions you have about your child's dental care.

February is
National
Children's Dental
Health Month

LIVE WELL, WORK WELL

Is Your Heart at Risk?

In the United States, someone has a heart attack every 34 seconds according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. What better time than February, American Heart Month, to take control of your heart health? Determine if you're at risk for heart disease. Answer the following questions and tally your points in this heart disease risk quiz:

What is your blood pressure?

- Below 120/80 (+0)
- Between 120/80 and 140/90 (+1)
- Above 140/90 (+3)
- Don't know (+1)

What is your cholesterol?

- HDL above 50, LDL below 130, triglycerides less than 150 (+0)
- Any of the following: HDL below 50, LDL above 130, triglycerides above 150 (+2)
- Don't know (+1)

How often do you eat fried foods?

- Once a month (+1)
- Several times a month (+2)
- Never (+0)

Does anyone in your family have heart disease?

- Yes, my mother did before age 65 or my father before age 55 (+2)
- No (+0)
- Don't know (+1)

On a typical weekend night, you:

- Have one glass of alcohol (+1)
- Have more than one glass of alcohol (+2)
- Don't drink alcohol (+0)



How many cigarettes have you smoked this week?

- None (+0)
- A few (+3)
- Half a pack or more a day (+8)

How many colors were in your last meal?

- 1 – ex: chicken and rice (+2)
- 2-4 – ex: some vegetables (+1)
- 4 or more – ex: salad and assorted vegetables (+0)

How do you feel after climbing three flights of stairs?

- Fine or even energized (+0)
- Winded (+1)
- I hardly ever climb stairs (+2)

What is your body mass index (BMI)?

- 18.5 – 24.9 (+0)
- 25 – 29.9 (+1)
- 30 or above (+2)

Results

0-2: You are on the right track to preventing heart disease. Exercise, eating right and not smoking can prevent about 80 percent of heart disease.
3-7: Even a few harmful habits can increase your risk of developing heart disease. Simply knowing your risk factors is important, especially if you need to reduce your cholesterol or blood pressure.

8 or higher: Get to the doctor. Make the commitment to one healthy behavior change, such as quitting smoking or exercising.



Snack Attack



It's mid-morning at work and you're already hungry for lunch. There are leftover doughnuts in the conference room and those potato chips in the vending machine are looking more appetizing by the minute. What can you do when you have a snack attack at work? Try to plan ahead. Pack several snacks to take with you to work each day,

either in the morning or the night before. But make sure that the snacks aren't filled with empty calories. Look for healthy snacks that will satisfy your hunger but are low in fat, sugar and salt. Good choices include:

- An apple with a tablespoon of peanut butter for dipping
- Trail mix with unsalted nuts
- Low-fat yogurt with a spoonful of granola or raisins
- Unsalted popcorn
- Whole grain crackers and low-fat cheese slices
- Rice cakes
- Any vegetable or fruit slices

Not only is packing one of these snacks at home a healthier option than most vending machine choices, it will save you money as well.

Prescription Savings



It is a common misconception that generic versions of brand-name prescription drugs are inferior. In fact, the FDA requires that generic drugs meet the same standards as their brand-name counterparts. The difference involves the research, development and marketing investment that went into producing the original brand-name drug.

When generic equivalents become available, they have the same active ingredients and chemical purity as the brand-name drugs they imitate. Other ingredients including tablet fillers, coatings, flavors or colors may differ. And because their development costs are significantly less, generic drugs are often much cheaper.

Next time you receive a prescription from your doctor, ask if there is a generic version of the drug available. Many health plans charge a lower copay for generic drugs.

This delicious alternative to traditional French fries is low-fat and packed with potassium.

Baked Sweet Potato Fries

- 4 large sweet potatoes
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 teaspoons sea salt
- 2 teaspoons black pepper

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Scrub potatoes and cut into 1/2-inch strips. Brush potatoes with olive oil. Sprinkle sea salt and black pepper over potato slices. Place potatoes on a cookie sheet, cover with aluminum foil and bake for 15 minutes. Remove foil, stir potatoes and continue baking uncovered for an additional 15 minutes or until golden brown.

For a flavor twist, try seasoning with garlic salt, cinnamon, or parmesan cheese instead of sea salt and black pepper.



Children's Health: Dental Hygiene

Just because primary teeth fall out doesn't mean children can go without dental care until their permanent teeth come in.

According to the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, children should see a dentist when their first tooth appears and no later than their first birthday. Babies with dental problems, due to trauma, disease or a developmental abnormality should see a dentist immediately.

How can I care for my child's teeth at home?

A child's first 20 primary teeth come in between the ages of 6 months and 3 years old. During this time it is important to start building good habits.

- Start brushing your child's teeth as soon as they come in. Brush his or her teeth for the first 4-5 years or until he or she seems able to do it alone.
- If your local water supply does not contain sufficient fluoride, your child may need fluoride supplements. Discuss this with your dentist.
- Do not put an infant or small child to bed with a bottle of juice or milk. The sugar and

acids in these liquids can cause tooth decay. (Nursing an infant to sleep, however, is safe.)

- Start flossing your child's teeth as soon as he or she has two teeth that touch each other. Most likely you will need to assist your child with flossing until age 6 or 7.
- Children who are prone to cavities may start using a mouthwash that contains fluoride when they are around 6 years old. Refrain from giving children mouthwash that contains alcohol. Also, make sure it is never swallowed.

What is the best way to brush my child's teeth?

- When your child's primary teeth begin to come in, brush them with a child-sized toothbrush and water.
- Once the child is 2 years old, you can begin brushing his or her teeth with a pea-sized amount of toothpaste. Be sure they spit out the toothpaste and rinses with

water so none is accidentally swallowed. Remember that some kinds of toothpaste are not recommended for children, so read the manufacturer's label before purchasing.

- Begin teaching your child how to brush his or her own teeth around age 2 or 3. You may still need to supervise or assist until they are around 6 or 7 years old to ensure that they are brushing effectively.
- Be sure to replace your child's toothbrush every 3 to 4 months – sooner if it appears worn.

If you ever have questions about your child's dental care, be sure to consult with your dentist.



Did You Know...?

When selecting oral care products, be sure to check for the American Dental Association (ADA) "Seal of Acceptance". This seal indicates that the product has met the ADA criteria for safety and effectiveness.