

“Dr. Neel’s” Tips for Parents

During your visit to Highpoint Dental Medicine, we discussed many important topics regarding your child’s present and future dental health. Here is a quick overview of the most critical “best practices” you can adopt to ensure your child achieves and maintains a lifelong healthy and beautiful smile. Please talk with your child and other caregivers about these tips and why they are so important for your child’s healthy smile.

Fluoride

If you live in an area where the water is non-fluoridated, your child’s pediatrician or I have given you a prescription for fluoride in liquid or chewable tablet form. Fluoride ingested when the teeth are developing is deposited throughout the entire tooth surface, strengthening your child’s teeth and making them more resistant to cavities. Please give your child the fluoride supplement at night after brushing each weekday and skip weekends to reduce the possibility of developing white spotting or streaking on your child’s permanent teeth.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
✗	fluoride	fluoride	fluoride	fluoride	fluoride	✗

Toothpaste and Oral Hygiene

For small children who are not able to rinse and spit, use non-fluoridated toothpaste or simply moisten their toothbrush in ACT fluoride rinse. Children should be supervised when brushing and flossing until they develop the dexterity to write in cursive. Your child should brush his or her teeth at least twice a day- in the morning and before bedtime. Flossing should also be a daily habit.



Snacks

Frequently eating sweet, sticky snacks is very harmful to your child’s oral health. This includes fruit snacks or fruit roll-ups which are loaded with sugar! This can easily lead to early childhood tooth decay. Teach your child and his or her caregivers this rhyme:



“If it’s sticky and sweet it’s a yucky treat!”

Also, it is a good idea to limit snacking. Preferred snacks include fresh fruits and vegetables, cheese and yogurt.

Juice and Water

Juice – even 100% fruit juice or juice diluted with water – is still loaded with sugar. Water or milk are the beverages of choice for your child. Juice should be limited to mealtime, 4-6 oz/day for children 1-6 years of age, and 7-12 oz/day for those ages 7-18.

Nursing Bottles at Night

Never put your child to bed with a bottle of milk or juice. This can lead to severe dental decay. Plain water is the best choice if your child must have a bottle at night.

Thumbs and Pacifiers

To prevent future orthodontic problems, pacifiers use should stop no later than 3 years old and thumb/ digit sucking habits should stop before the permanent teeth erupt.



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