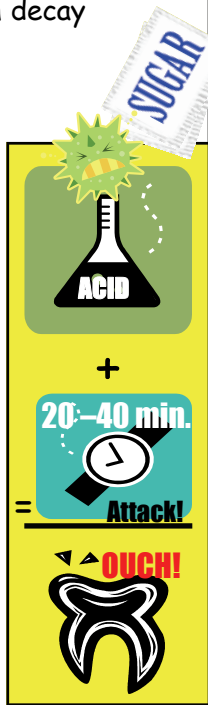


How Decay Starts...

- ◆ The germs that cause tooth decay use sugar to grow and live.
- ◆ When you eat or drink sugary foods the germs make plaque.
- ◆ Plaque is a sticky substance that forms on teeth after eating. Plaque irritates the gums and makes them red and swollen.
- ◆ Acids in plaque PLUS acid in soft drinks attack tooth enamel. Enamel is the hard, white outer layer that protects the tooth.
- ◆ Each acid attack lasts 20 to 40 minutes.
- ◆ Acid attacks start over with every sip.
- ◆ Frequent acid attacks weaken the tooth enamel (the protective white outer layer of the tooth). Tooth decay begins when the enamel is damaged.
- ◆ Even diet or "sugar-free" soft drinks have acid that can harm your teeth.



- ◆ Fruit juice and sport drinks do not have as much acid like sodas. They do contain sugar which can cause tooth decay.

Did You Know?

If family members have tooth decay, children have a higher risk of tooth decay. To reduce your risk of decay:

- ◆ Do not share eating utensils or drink from the same cup.
- ◆ Each family member should have their own toothbrush.
- ◆ Brush two times a day with toothpaste that has fluoride.

If you want to know more about keeping your teeth healthy, contact the:

Office of Oral Health
 Family Health Administration
 Maryland Department of Health
 and Mental Hygiene
 201 West Preston Street, 3rd Floor
 Baltimore, MD 21201
 410-767-5300
oralhealth@dhmh.state.md.us
www.fha.state.md.us/oralhealth



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The Department, in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, ensures that qualified individuals with disabilities are given an opportunity to participate in and benefit from DHMH services, programs, benefits, and employment opportunities.

04/09

BRUSHING

& FLOSSING

YOUR TEETH



*Some tips for good oral health
 from the Maryland Department of
 Health and Mental Hygiene*



Martin O'Malley, Governor
 Anthony G. Brown, Lieutenant Governor
 John M. Colmers, Secretary

Brush Your Teeth with Toothpaste that has Fluoride

Brushing removes plaque and food from your teeth and reduces the risk of tooth decay and gum disease.



Brushing Tips

- ◆ Always use a soft-bristled toothbrush.
- ◆ Replace your toothbrush every 3 months.
- ◆ Never share toothbrushes, it spreads germs.
- ◆ Children at high risk for tooth decay should use toothpaste that has fluoride as early as possible.
- ◆ Children under 2 years old should only use a smear of toothpaste that has fluoride until they are able to spit it out.
- ◆ Children under 7 years of age need an adult's help brushing their teeth. Use half a pea-sized amount of toothpaste that has fluoride.

How to Brush

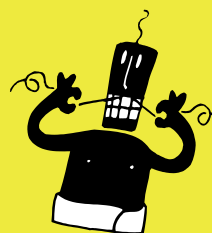
- ◆ Place the toothbrush against the gum line at a 45-degree angle. Use a small circular motion to brush your teeth.
- ◆ Brush back and forth on the chewing surfaces of your teeth holding the brush flat.
- ◆ Brush the back of your teeth.
- ◆ Brush your tongue! This will freshen your breath and remove germs.
- ◆ Brush 2 times a day for at least 2-3 minutes.
- ◆ Be sure to brush at bedtime to remove bacteria that can cause decay while you are sleeping.

Flossing Tips

- ◆ Flossing cleans between the teeth where a toothbrush cannot reach.
- ◆ Flossing helps control bad breath.
- ◆ Children should never floss without an adult's help. A dentist or dental hygienist can show you how to floss your child's teeth.

How to Floss

- ◆ Wrap about 18 inches of floss around the middle fingers. Gently slide the floss between the teeth (don't snap the floss into the gums).
- ◆ 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.



Types of Floss

- ◆ Waxed or unwaxed
- ◆ Flavored or unflavored
- ◆ Wide or regular



All types of floss are acceptable. Prethreaded flossers are helpful for children learning how to floss or for those who have trouble with arm movement.

5 Steps to Avoid Soda Decay

1. Drink soda in moderation. Sipping one soda all day long means acid attacks all day long!
2. Use a straw to keep sugar from teeth.
3. Rinse your mouth out with water to dilute the sugar and acid.
4. Never drink soda pop, juice or milk before bedtime.
5. Brush your teeth twice a day with toothpaste that has fluoride.

Acid + Sugar = Trouble!

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

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

* Laboratory tests, University of Minnesota School of Dentistry, 2000; **USDA: 4.2 grams = 1 tsp. of sugar