

Tooth decay

In the UK, more children are admitted to hospital because of tooth decay than any other health problem.

Tooth decay occurs when bacteria in food and drinks forms a layer called plaque on the surface of the teeth. If plaque isn't brushed off, it will eat away at the tooth and cause a painful hole.

Tooth decay is not just painful – it can cause infections and affect the way your child speaks and eats.

Taking good care of your child's teeth will help to prevent tooth decay.



Making brushing fun!

Get your child excited about tooth brushing!

For games, songs and fun activities visit:

www.leedssmiles.co.uk



You can get more support with tooth brushing from your local children's centre, health visitor or dentist.



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How often should I brush my teeth?

Got questions about little teeth?



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It's really important to take good care of your child's teeth so they have healthy teeth now and when they're older.

Babies and young children love to copy grown-ups. Let your child watch you brush your teeth, and as they get older you can brush your teeth together.

Children's teeth

- Start brushing your baby's teeth as soon as they get their first tooth.
- The easiest way to brush your baby's teeth is to sit them on your knee with their head resting against your chest.
- Use just a smear of toothpaste on a little brush, and a pea-size amount once they have a full set of baby teeth.
- Start taking your baby to the dentist as soon as the first tooth comes through.
- Help your child to clean their teeth properly until they are at least seven years old – children don't have the skill to brush them well enough until this age.
- Too much sugar can damage your child's teeth, so it's best to offer them water and milk to drink, and limit the amount of sugary food they have.



Healthy teeth

- Brush twice a day for two minutes – at bedtime and one other time in the day.
- Use fluoride toothpaste.
- Brush the front and back of the teeth in small circles.
- Use floss to keep the surfaces between teeth clean.
- Visit the dentist regularly.

