

DIET AND YOUR ORAL HEALTH

The American Dental Association has long recognized the link between good oral health and sound nutrition. There is a growing concern among America's dentists that many of their patients are consuming record numbers of sugar-filled sodas, sweetened fruit drinks, and non-nutritious snack foods.

Eating patterns and food choices among children and teens are important factors that affect how quickly youngsters may develop tooth decay. When bacteria (plaque) come into contact with sugar or starch in the mouth, acid is produced, which attacks the teeth for 20 minutes or more. This can eventually result in tooth decay.

The foods we choose generally affect our overall health, including our teeth and gums. The USDA's Dietary Guidelines encourage consumers to limit intake of beverages and foods high in added sugars that may crowd out other health foods from the daily diet. Health and nutrition experts recommend following the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Guide Pyramid and the five major food groups:

- Breads, Cereals, Other Grain Products
- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs, Nuts
- Milk, Cheese, Yogurt

What can you do?

- Maintain a healthy diet.
- Make sure water is readily available and drink water more often.
- Limit eating and drinking between meals. Give preference to nutritious foods for snacks.
- Maintain good oral hygiene.
- Follow up with routine visits to see Hygienist and Dr. Markiewicz



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