



12/03/25

RE: Oral health information available online for your children

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As part of the HSE Oral Health programme, we would like to take this opportunity to share some online information on oral health for your children. It is important your child's mouth is maintained healthy so that he/ she can be free from pain, able to eat and sleep without distress and not miss unnecessary time out of school. It is important to therefore try to maintain a healthy diet and implement an effective oral hygiene routine.

We attach some diet and dental health advice for the primary school age aged between 4–7 years and 8 –13 years. In these guides you will find links to recommended online resources for healthy lunches and effective tooth brushing.

Children with additional needs often have an increased risk of dental disease. We recommend the Dental Health Foundation's new publication "Oral Health for Autistic Children – A Guide for Adults", which provides useful aids and supports for parents.

Kind regards

The HSE Oral Health Promotion Team



CHILDREN 4 – 7 YEARS

- Baby teeth hold the space for adult teeth to grow into so it is vitally important to look after baby's teeth.
- Always brush twice a day using a pea sized amount of fluoride toothpaste, in the morning and at bed time for 2- 3 minutes and help your child with brushing.
- Spit, don't rinse after brushing.
- If using a pacifier/ thumb sucking at bed time do your best to stop as it may change the growth pattern of the jaw and cause misalignment of the teeth.
- Reduce the frequency of sugar. Choose healthy snacks between meals such as whole fruits, cheese and crackers, carrot sticks.
 - <https://www.safefood.net/start/healthy-snacks-children>
- Water and milk are the only tooth friendly drinks.
 - <https://www.dentalhealth.ie/children-oral-health/sugar-and-oral-health-video/>
- Always wear a mouth guard when playing sport.
- Visit your dentist at least once a year.

<https://www.dentalhealth.ie/resources/educational/mighty-mouth-school-programme-english-irish-versions/>

Effective Tooth brushing and Flossing: <https://www.dentalhealth.ie/adult-oral-health/the-healthy-mouth/effective-toothbrushing/>

Healthy Lunches:

<https://www.safefood.net/Professional/Education/Primary/Tastebuds/Healthy-choices>



CHILDREN AGE 8 -13 YEARS

For a healthy mouth and body follow the **3 P's**:

Protect your mouth- Brush the teeth using fluoride toothpaste twice daily for 2-3 minutes. Spit, don't rinse after brushing.

Prevent decay – reduce the number of sugary drinks and foods that are consumed every day. Eat healthy snacks like fruit and vegetables. Water and milk are the most tooth friendly drink. Avoid juices, fizzy drinks and sport drinks as they increase the risk of acid attacks, decay and tooth wear. Please see the link on sugary drinks.

<https://www.dentalhealth.ie/children-oral-health/sugar-and-oral-health-video/>

Ppractice Good Oral Care – brush your teeth twice a day and your dentist may recommend flossing around 12 -13 years when all permanent teeth have erupted.

- If you wear braces, brush thoroughly every time you eat to remove food particles. Ask your dentist about mouthwash use.
- Always wear a mouth guard when playing sports to help reduce the risk of dental injuries.
- www.dentalhealth.ie/assets/files/pdf/article_on_sports_and_oral_health_-_july_2020.pdf
- Visit your dentist at least once a year.

<https://www.dentalhealth.ie/children-oral-health/children/>

Effective Tooth brushing and Flossing: <https://www.dentalhealth.ie/adult-oral-health/the-healthy-mouth/effective-toothbrushing/>

Fluoride Toothpaste: <https://www.dentalhealth.ie/adult-oral-health/oral-health-care-products1/fluoride-toothpastes/>

Healthy Lunches <https://www.safefood.net/education/healthy-lunchboxes>