



Healthy People Dental

3 TIPS FOR HEALTHY SUMMER SMILES

Summer sun brings summer fun. While warm months are perfect for spending time together, summer vacation can also throw off your usual dental routine. Here are three ways to prevent summertime tooth decay:



1 STAY ON A ROUTINE

Whether your kids are staying up to catch fireflies or a fireworks show, resist the temptation to skip brushing before a late bedtime—or let it slide when they sleep in the next morning. “Don’t forget about your smile over the summer,” says the American Dental Association. It’s important for families to consistently brush and floss, which keeps kids on track for healthy back-to-school dental visits.

No matter how eventful the upcoming months become, supervise that they are brushing twice a day for 2 minutes with fluoride toothpaste. Simple things like brushing calendars can help everyone stay on track over the summer. Plus, it’s a chance to spend more time together. Brushing alongside your children for 2 minutes, twice a day for the three months of summer gives you 6 extra hours together, so make the most of them!



CLEAN BETWEEN TEETH ONCE A DAY

Children should be flossing between any two teeth that touch. However, many kids don’t have motor skills to floss until they are over 10 years old. If your child needs help, try different types of interdental cleaners or put your hands over theirs to guide them and get the job done at the same time.



2 MAKE YOUR BACK-TO-SCHOOL DENTAL VISITS EARLY

Some schools require back-to-school dental visits for certain grades, and these checkups can be a good way to be sure your child’s teeth stayed healthy. It is a good idea to make your child’s back-to-school appointment early in the summer to avoid the August rush and help insure you get the appointment time that works best for you. Check ups help to spot and take care of any issues, so your child doesn’t have to miss class once school starts. Visiting the dentist regularly can help your child’s smile stay healthy all year long.



3 SAY NO TO SUGARY DRINKS AND SNACKS

As the temperature rises, it’s common for families to sip and snack during sports tournaments, festivals or nearly any community event. Watch your family’s intake of lemonade, juice and soda. Consider sugary drinks treats to enjoy once in a while, and not often. Instead, offer water (even better if it has fluoride) to beat the heat, or milk to drink with meals. And, don’t let summertime grazing damage your child’s smile. Taking a break from snacking is healthy for your teeth. It allows time for saliva to bathe the teeth, wash away leftover food and get stronger. If you find yourself spending more time at home, snack smarter, and let your children tell you when they’re hungry instead of offering snacks throughout the day. They’re not afraid to let you know when they want something to eat!

