

February Marks Our Thirteenth Year of Helping Spokane's Children

In February 2008, the Spokane Access to Baby and Child (ABCD) program will celebrate its 13th birthday. Spokane launched the original ABCD program, addressing the dental access needs of very young, Medicaid-eligible children.

ABCD dentists have forever changed the lives of over 35,000 eligible children. We salute those efforts.

Thanks to all dentists whose skills and energy have given Spokane's children a reason to smile!

Good Advice from ABCD

I need an adult to brush my teeth once a day until I'm eight years old.

The best time for an adult to brush my teeth is at night before bed.

Please remind me to brush on my own two times each day.

I only need a grain of rice/pea size amount of toothpaste.

Please keep the toothbrush bristles half on my tooth and half on my gums.

When my teeth touch, please floss my teeth once per day.

Use toothpaste with fluoride in it.

Our family should use products that contain *Xylitol* (gum, mints, toothpaste, etc.). Xylitol not only reduces the number of cavity causing bacteria, but can reduce the likelihood of inner-ear infections.

The best snacks are cheese, fresh fruit and fresh veggies.

A sugary snack is ok at a meal. Keep the **frequency** of sugar in my diet low.

~ Thanks to Eve Rutherford, DDS, PLLC, Snohomish ABCD Champion

New Tamper-Resistant Prescription Pads Required

As of October 1, 2007, all written Medicaid prescriptions must be written on tamper-resistant prescription pads. This means that the tamper-free prescription forms must meet at least one of the following characteristics:

No copying: Pads must prevent unauthorized copying of complete or blank prescription forms. For example panthograms that reveal the word "void" when copied.

No alterations: Pads must prevent erasure or modification of writing on the prescription form. For example, chemical stains or altered backgrounds reveal attempts at ink or toner removal.

No counterfeiting: Pads must be distinctive and can't be reproduced, such as a watermark.

After October 1, 2008, the pads must meet all three characteristics to be considered tamper-resistant.

Spokane's Newest ABCD Certified Dentists

The following dentists are now participating in the ABCD program and are eligible for the ABCD enhanced fees. We welcome them in caring for Spokane's littlest tykes!

Dr. Amandeep Basrai

Dr. Liana Bulin

Dr. Travis Coulter

Dr. Steven Crump

Dr. Rob Leale

Dr. Brian McCall

Dr. Rudyard McKennon

Dr. Amanda Roper

Dr. Eric Walker

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What to Eat to Keep Your Teeth

Nutritional approaches to oral health go beyond “don’t eat sugar.” Research indicates that each of our 32 teeth provides yet another reason to watch what we eat. According to Delta Dental Policy Committee, adequate nutrition is important in disease prevention and nutritional counseling is becoming an increasingly important tactic in preventive dentistry. The quality and consistency of foods and the combinations in which they are eaten can affect the likelihood of tooth decay.

Ongoing research indicates that antioxidants and other nutrients found in fruits, vegetables, legumes and nuts may strengthen immunity and improve the body’s ability to fight bacteria and inflammation, all of which can help protect the teeth and gums.

Calcium and vitamin D supplements are known to decrease the risk for tooth loss in the elderly. As bone loss in the oral cavity can lead to tooth loss, many of the same efforts to ward off osteoporosis can be beneficial to tooth retention. Adding powdered milk to cooked dishes helps those who don’t care for milk or cheese to get the calcium needed to protect their teeth and jawbones.

Folic acid promotes a healthy mouth and supports cell growth throughout the entire body. This member of the vitamin B family is found in green leafy vegetables and brewer’s yeast.

Antioxidant vitamins such as vitamin C and other nutrients from fruits and vegetables help protect gums and other tissues from cell damage and bacterial infection. Studies indicate that fresh cranberries can interrupt the bonding of oral bacteria before they can form damaging plaque.

Eating sugary or carbohydrate-rich foods as part of a balanced meal is better than eating them alone. The body produces more saliva to help digest larger meals, which washes away more food and helps neutralize harmful acids before they can attack teeth.

Foods that take a long time to chew can damage teeth. That’s because sticky foods, including nutritious choices like raisins, dates, and dried fruit hold acid against teeth longer than other foods.

Photographers have known for years what dentists now know: Cheese and smiles go together. Cooked or cold, cheese provides a burst of calcium that mixes with plaque and sticks to the teeth. This sticky mixture protects teeth from the acid that causes tooth decay and helps rebuild tooth enamel on the spot.



Complete DSHS dental billing instruction and fee schedule can be found at:
<http://fortress.wa.gov/dshs/maa/ProvRel/Dental/Dental.html>

TOOTH TRIVIA

The ADA advises that it is not necessarily the amount of sugar in sweets that can cause tooth damage. The stickier things are, like cakes and gummy bears, the less likely that they’ll be washed out from between the teeth by our saliva. Any kind of candy that sticks to your teeth is more harmful than a chocolate bar or M&Ms, that get washed away.

You will get fewer cavities if you eat a bag of candy in one sitting and then brush your teeth than if you slowly eat the candy a piece at a time all day.

If you are right-handed, you will tend to chew your food on your right side. If you are left-handed, you’ll tend to chew your food on the left side.

An elephant’s molars measure one foot across and weigh between 8 and 10 pounds each.

If one identical twin grows up without a given tooth coming in, the second identical twin will usually grow up without the same tooth.

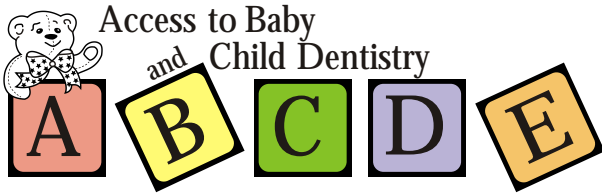
Human teeth are almost as hard as rocks!

When we chew, only our lower jaw moves. Our upper jaw does not move while eating.

Crocodiles don’t clean their own teeth; they let a little bird called a plover pick their teeth for scraps of leftover food.

Teeth in a growing fetus begin to develop only 6 weeks after conception.

The snail’s mouth is no larger than the head of a pin but has around 25,600 teeth on its tongue.



Welcome to Our Newest ABCD“E” Providers...

Dr. Kristina Anderson
Dr. Alan Maddox
Dr. Matt Thompson
Dr. John Lee

KIDS CORNER

When To Do The “White” Thing:

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry advises parents to wait until their child is at least 13 before using over-the-counter whitening strips or having them done professionally. Unless all the permanent teeth are fully descended, the colors can become mismatched. However, whitening toothpastes with their very low levels of bleaching ingredients are safe.



Parents Can Keep Decay Away

Babies: Clean your baby’s gums even before the first teeth erupt. Wipe them with a clean damp cloth after feedings.

Toddlers: Give your infant fluoride supplements at six months of age, as recommended by a dentist or physician. Brush your child’s teeth for at least 30 seconds (ideally a minute) after breakfast and before bed. Lean her head on your lap and place a soft-bristled toothbrush with a small head at a 45-degree angle to the teeth. Start using a ‘smear’ of fluoride toothpaste when she’s 2-3 years old. Begin flossing teeth for her when two of her teeth are touching.

Preschoolers: Brush your own teeth at the same time your child brushes and give him lots of positive feedback. Studies have shown that manual toothbrushes are just as effective as powered ones. But if letting your kid use an electric or battery-operated one makes it easier for him to brush, go for it.

School-Age Kids: Your child can begin brushing and flossing on her own at around age 7 or 8. If she can tie her own shoes, chances are she can brush solo. She should now brush for 2 minutes. Look for food and plaque around the gum line of her teeth to see whether she’s doing a sufficient job. She may also chew gum with Xylitol.

Use Only Water in Sippy Cups:

Because sippy cups prevent spills, they’re often used by children for long periods of time – over months and years – rather than as the transitional drinking device for which they were created. When kids sip for extended periods on sugared beverages, they’re exposed to a higher risk of decay. Sippy cups should only contain water unless it’s mealtime. This advice comes from the American Academy of Pediatric Dentists.

Gum Is Good:

In July, the ADA awarded its seal of approval to Wrigley’s sugar-free gums – Orbit, Extra and Eclipse, the first time the ADA seal has been allowed to appear on gum. Independent review confirms that these three gums have been shown to help prevent cavities, reduce plaque acid and strengthen teeth. Studies showed that chewing these gum products for 20 minutes, 3 times a day after meals increases saliva production. Saliva helps neutralize and wash away plaque acid and bathes the teeth in minerals such as calcium, phosphate and fluoride.

Popular Sports Drinks Could Damage Teeth:

Regular long-term use of sports or energy drinks may cause irreversible damage to dental enamel, according to a study cited in *General Dentistry*, the Academy of General Dentistry’s clinical peer-review journal. Enamel damage caused by non-cola and sports beverages was 3 to 11 times greater than cola-based drinks. Exercise caution when using sports drinks over a long period of time. Alternate sports drinks with water or low-fat milk after a workout.

New Dry Mouth Campaign Launched

The Academy of General Dentistry has launched a new dry mouth campaign. Dry mouth is caused by a decrease in the amount of saliva in the mouth when the salivary glands do not work properly. The salivary glands help keep the mouth moist, which helps prevent decay and other oral health problems. Dry mouth may be a sign of a serious health condition or may occur when a person is upset or stressed.

Studies have shown that up to 400 prescriptions and over-the-counter medications can contribute to dry mouth symptoms. Most commonly, medications for high blood pressure, anti-depressants, painkillers, tranquilizers, diuretics and antihistamines are the most common troublemakers.

Dry mouth can cause extensive tooth decay, even in a person who's had a healthy mouth for years, and it contributes to many other oral health conditions. There are products that help to mitigate dry mouth and other medications with fewer side-effects may sometimes be substituted.



Signs and symptoms of dry mouth:

- increased need to sip or drink fluids when swallowing
- difficulty speaking
- difficulty with swallowing
- a burning or sore sensation in the mouth
- an inability to eat certain foods
- diminished or altered sense of taste
- increased susceptibility to oral infection
- sleep interruptions due to thirst
- difficulty wearing dentures
- tooth decay
- gingivitis
- stale or bad breath

~ From The Academy of General Dentistry's Dry Mouth Campaign



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