



SMILE BRIGHT! KEEPING TEETH AND GUMS HEALTHY



Our class is doing an experiment to teach us the importance of taking good care of our teeth! Be sure to ask your child for updates over the next several days. Keeping teeth clean is part of a healthy lifestyle. Brushing your teeth twice every day keeps your teeth—and your gums—clean and healthy. Even if your child doesn't have permanent teeth yet, he or she still needs to brush. If your child doesn't brush, the permanent teeth growing underneath can be damaged by the tooth decay that can be growing on the surface.

You need to brush permanent teeth every day because that's the best way to keep them healthy. Those teeth need to last your whole life! Healthy teeth are just one sign of good health.



AT HOME ACTIVITY

Don't Forget the Floss! Brushing is important, but it won't remove the plaque and particles of food between your teeth, under the gum line or under braces. You'll need to floss these spaces at least once a day. Here are some tips on building the habit:

- Your dentist may recommend unwaxed floss because it's thinner and easier to slide through small spaces.
- To avoid hurting your gums, carefully insert the floss between two teeth, using a back and forth motion. Gently bring it to the gum line, but don't force it under the gums. Curve the floss around the edge of your tooth in the shape of the letter "C" and slide it up and down.
- Make sure to floss all the spaces between teeth and behind your back teeth as well.



KEEP UP WITH CALCIUM

Calcium is essential for strong, healthy bones, gums and teeth. It's also heart-healthy, improves blood pressure, and helps maintain a healthy weight as part of a nutritious diet!

Eat a variety of calcium-rich foods such as:

- Low-fat or fat-free milk
- Yogurt, plain or low-fat
- Cottage cheese, Swiss, or cheddar cheeses
- Chinese cabbage, kale, and broccoli
- Salmon

How much calcium do children need each day?

- Children ages 1 to 3: 700 milligrams
- Children ages 4 to 8: 1,000 milligrams
- Youth ages 9 to 18: 1,300 milligrams