

From our Dental Director...

As soon as a baby's first teeth appear, the child is susceptible to tooth decay. This condition is often referred to as "Baby Bottle Syndrome". In some unfortunate cases, infants and toddlers have experienced severe tooth decay that has resulted in dental restorations or extractions. The good news is that decay is preventable!

Decay occurs when sweetened liquids are given and are left clinging to an infant's teeth for long periods. Many sweet liquids cause problems, including milk, formula and fruit juice. Bacteria in the mouth use these sugars as food. They then produce acids that attack the teeth. Each time your child drinks these liquids, acids attack for 20 minutes or longer. After many attacks, the teeth can decay. Follow these easy steps to help prevent tooth decay:

- After each feeding, wipe the baby's gums with a clean gauze pad and begin brushing your child's teeth when the first tooth erupts.
- Never allow your child to fall asleep with a bottle containing milk, formula, fruit juice or sweetened liquids.
- Avoid filling your child's bottle with liquids such as sugar water and soft drinks.

Did you know?

You can now print an ID card directly from our website. If you haven't done so, log onto our website, www.libertydentalplan.com, and register as a member. Once you are logged in, simply click on "Print an ID card". You can print as many copies as you wish and give one to each enrolled member of your family.



Be aware of your summer diet...

With summer here, we often find ourselves with a more relaxed schedule. Don't fall into a relaxed "summer diet" that can be detrimental to your dental health. Your body is like a complex machine. The foods you choose as fuel and how often you "fill up" affect your general health and that of your teeth and gums. Many dentists are concerned that their patients are consuming record numbers of sugar-filled sodas, sweetened fruit drinks, and non-nutritious snacks that affect their teeth. These items generally have little, if any, nutritional value and over time they can take a toll on teeth.

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 in the mouth, acid is produced, which attacks the teeth for 20 minutes or more. This can eventually result in tooth decay.

Foods that contain sugars of any kind

can contribute to tooth decay. Almost all foods, including milk or vegetables, have some type of sugar. However, they shouldn't be removed from our diets because many of them contain important nutrients and they add pleasure to eating. To help control the amount of sugar you consume, read food labels and choose foods and beverages that are low in added sugars. Added sugars often are present in soft drinks, candy, cookies and pastries.

If your diet lacks certain nutrients, it may be more difficult for tissues in your mouth to resist infection. This may contribute to periodontal (gum) disease, a major cause of tooth loss in adults. Although poor nutrition does not cause periodontal disease directly, many researchers believe that the disease progresses faster and could be more severe in people with nutrient-poor diets.

What can I do?

- Maintain a healthy diet.
- Make sure water is readily available.

- Limit the number of between-meal snacks.
- Brush thoroughly twice a day.
- Floss to remove plaque from under the gums and between teeth.
- Schedule regular dental visits for checkups and cleanings.

Put a dental checkup on your child's summer schedule. The more children understand about their oral health, the more likely they will be to adopt habits to help them keep their teeth throughout their lifetime.



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Dental X-rays

How often X-rays should be taken depends on the patient's individual health needs. It is important to recognize that each patient is different from the next. Your dentist will review your history, examine your mouth and then decide whether you need x-rays and what type. If you are a new patient,

your dentist may recommend x-rays to determine the present status of the hidden areas of your mouth and help detect changes that may occur later. The schedule of needing x-rays at recall visits varies according to your age, risk for disease and signs and symptoms. Recent films may be needed to detect

new cavities, or to determine the status of gum disease or for evaluation of growth and development. Children may need x-rays more often than adults because their teeth and jaws are still developing and because their teeth are more likely to be affected by tooth decay than those of adults.

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We're on the web!

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To:

Summer activities bring unforeseen accidents...

Don't let a dental accident ruin your summer fun! Reduce your chances, and be prepared!



There are a number of simple precautions you can take to avoid accident and injury to your teeth. One way to reduce the chances of damage to your teeth, lips, cheek and tongue is to wear a mouthguard when participating in sports or recreational activities that may pose a risk. Avoid chewing ice, popcorn kernels and hard candy — all of which can crack a tooth.

Accidents do happen, and knowing what to do when one occurs can mean the difference between saving and losing a tooth.

Most dentists reserve time in their daily schedules for emergency patients. Call your dentist and provide as much detail as possible about your condition. Re-

member, pain is a signal that something is wrong - a problem that will not disappear even if the pain subsides.

Bitten Lip or Tongue: Clean the area gently with a cloth and apply cold compresses to reduce any swelling. If the bleeding doesn't stop, go to a hospital emergency room immediately.

Broken Tooth: Rinse your mouth with warm water to clean the area. Use cold compresses on the area to keep any swelling down. Call your dentist immediately.

Possible Broken Jaw: Apply cold compresses to control swelling. Go to your dentist or a hospital emergency room immediately.

Knocked Out Tooth: Hold the tooth by the crown (the part that shows in the mouth above your gumline) and rinse off the root of the tooth in water if it's dirty. Do not scrub it or remove any attached tissue fragments. If possible, gently insert and hold the tooth in its socket. If that isn't possible, put the tooth in a cup of milk and get to the dentist as quickly as possible. Remember to take the tooth with you!

Toothache: Rinse your mouth with warm water to clean it out. Gently use dental floss or an interdental cleaner to ensure that there is no food or other debris caught between the teeth. Never put aspirin or any other painkiller against the gums near the aching tooth as it may burn the gum tissue. If the pain persists, contact your dentist.