

## Remember

- Brush teeth last thing at night and one other time during the day.
- Choose milk and plain water.
- Reduce the amount of sugary foods and drinks given in a single day and keep them to mealtimes.
- Always choose sugar free medicines.
- Visit the dentist regularly.

A list of local dental practitioners is available from:

**Healthy Living**  
Ground Floor, Lincoln House  
College Street  
St.Helens  
WA10 1UQ

We are open: Monday - Friday, 9.00am - 5.00pm

☎ 0300 300 0103

🌐 [www.healthysthelens.co.uk/teeth](http://www.healthysthelens.co.uk/teeth)

🐦 @HealthySTH

✉ [hit@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:hit@sthelens.gov.uk)

## Oral Health Care for Babies



## Teething

Babies generally get their first tooth between six and eight months old, but this can vary. Some babies may have teething troubles.

### To help:

- Give your baby something hard to bite on. A cooled, gel-filled teething ring can help soothe the gums.
- Try using an infant teething gel or teething powders.
- If necessary use infant sugar free pain relief - always read the label.

Start brushing as soon as your baby's first tooth appears.

Use a smear of ordinary family fluoride toothpaste (1000 - 1450ppm). Fluoride helps to make teeth stronger.

Brush your baby's teeth last thing at night and one other time during the day.

## Drinks

Breast milk provides the best nutrition for babies.

To keep your baby's teeth healthy, choose breast milk, formula milk or plain cool boiled water.

Start your baby on a free flow cup by six months old and aim to have your baby off a bottle by twelve months old.

Never give your baby sugary drinks in a bottle or valve type feeder cup as this can cause tooth decay.

Do not give your baby sugar-free or diet drinks as these are not recommended for young children.

Avoid cordial, squash and all fizzy drinks - even the low or reduced sugar ones can damage your baby's teeth.

Fresh fruit juice can be given after six months, dilute one part juice to ten parts water in a cup and serve only at mealtimes.

## Food

Sugar will cause tooth decay if given to babies and children too often during the day and at night.

When introducing solid foods to your baby, never add sugar to their food.

Once your baby is having regular meals, keep anything sugary to mealtimes only.

Make sure that any snacks given are sugar free. Fresh fruit, cheese, toast and plain rice cakes are healthier choices.

Dried fruits are very sugary and sticky and should be kept to mealtimes.

Always check food labels as sugar hides in so many foods.

Sugar is also known by the following names: Sucrose, glucose, maltose, fructose, dextrose, glucose syrup and honey.

### Watch out for hidden sugars!

## Dummies

If breastfeeding do not give a dummy until breastfeeding is well established.

If your baby has a dummy, aim to stop using it by twelve months old.

The over use of dummies can affect the position of teeth and prevent babies from babbling, which is the first stage in learning to talk.

Never dip a dummy into anything sweet.

## Sugar Free Medicines

Always ask for sugar free medicines for your baby and check with the doctor if they need a prescription. If they contain sugar they can cause tooth decay.

Medicines are often spread out over the day and may be given during the night.

## Visiting The Dentist

Take your baby to visit the dentist from an early age. This will help your baby to get used to the dental surgery and staff.

Brush teeth last thing at night and one other time during the day

Do not rinse out after toothbrushing, just spit out any remaining toothpaste. Children need help with toothbrushing.

