

## Visiting the dentist

Your child should visit the dentist to have regular check-ups. Take your child as often as the dentist recommends.

## Sugar free medicines

Medicines are often spread out over the day and may be given during the night. If it contains sugar it can cause tooth decay so try and ask for sugar-free medicines at the pharmacy or doctors.

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 Children





## Toothbrushing

Teeth should be brushed as soon as they appear in the mouth.

An ideal toothbrush should have a small head with soft/medium textured bristles.

For children under 3 years of age use a smear of ordinary family fluoride toothpaste.

For children over 3 years of age use a pea-sized blob.

Fluoride is important as it helps to make teeth stronger.

There is no fluoride in the local water supply.

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

Children need help with toothbrushing up to the age of 7- 8 years.

Your child should spit out after brushing and not rinse. This helps the fluoride to work for longer on the teeth.

## Drinks

Milk and plain water are the only safe drinks for healthy teeth.

All juices (fresh or cordial) - even the low or reduced sugar ones - can damage your child's teeth.

Sugar free, no added sugar, low sugar, fizzy and diet drinks are all very acidic and can harm teeth if given too often.

Children under 4 years of age should not have sugar free or diet drinks as artificial sweeteners are not recommended for young children.

Look out for aspartame, saccharin and sorbitol as they are all artificial sweeteners.

## Food

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

It is important to cut down how often your child has food and drinks with added sugar.

Keep sugary foods and drinks to mealtimes only.

Make sure that any foods are sugar free. Fresh fruit, fresh vegetables, cheese, toast, plain rice cakes are healthier choices.

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

Do not use sweets as a reward. Try stickers, stars or small toys.

Sugar is also known by the following names:

glucose, glucose syrup, fructose, sucrose, dextrose, honey, maltose.

**Watch out for these hidden sugars!**

