

Getting your child ready for school starting school with a smile

This special time in your child's life is a time for learning and should be the start of a pattern of good habits to be carried into adult life.

With so much new happening, dental care sometimes gets pushed into the background.

Healthy teeth and gums are important and these simple guidelines will help your child have better teeth.

Sugar causes decay

Sugary food and drinks can make holes in milk teeth very quickly. Ask the school what your child may take for play-time. Fruit is best; avoid biscuits and sweets. If your child takes a packed lunch, try to limit the amount of sugar it contains. It is quite easy to have interesting and varied packed lunches that are almost sugar-free. See over the page for more suggestions. Try to resist visiting the sweet shop on the way home from school.



Toothbrushing

However busy the day has been, never neglect brushing teeth at bedtime. Brush teeth and gums in a circular motion, using a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Toothbrushing can be difficult for young children; let them do it first and then you can give them a brush too. Do not forget to brush every morning as well, either before breakfast or half an hour afterwards.

Routine dental checks

By now your child has probably already visited a dentist. Even if you cannot see anything wrong, routine visits can show if there are any minor problems before they get too bad. Waiting until your child is in pain with toothache could be too late and may result in the loss of a tooth.

There will be smiles all round if you help form good habits now.

Customer Care Team

If you have a query about our health services, or would like to comment, compliment or complain about Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust, you can contact the **Customer Care Team**.

Phone: 0300 123 1807, 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday
Please say if you would like the team to call you back
Text: 07943 091958 **Email:** kcht.cct@nhs.net

Address: Customer Care Team, Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust, Trinity House, 110-120 Upper Pemberton, Eureka Park, Ashford, Kent TN25 4AZ **Web:** www.kentcht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read or large print, please ask a member of staff.

You will be asked for your agreement to treatment and, if necessary, your permission to share your personal information.

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Packed lunches

It can be a real headache trying to think of different ideas for a packed lunch every day.

It's all too easy to fall into bad habits; a jam sandwich, a chocolate biscuit and a sweet drink. These are all high in sugar and can cause tooth decay, especially when eaten at a time when teeth cannot be cleaned.

Use this leaflet to help make some healthier choices.

Make a list below of your child's favourite **sugar-free** foods and pin this advice sheet up in the kitchen.

Nibbles

Try some of these to make a change:

- Raw carrot sticks.
- Tomatoes.
- Chicken drumsticks.
- Pizza portion.
- Pieces of cucumber or celery.
- Cheese chunks.
- Plain crisps (occasionally).
- Dried fruit.
- Plain yoghurt or fromage frais*.

*Beware

Low fat does not mean low sugar. Some varieties have up to five teaspoons of sugar in each pot. Buy plain and add finely chopped or pureed fruit.

**If your child has an allergy,
make appropriate choices.**

To keep food fresh use a cool pack.

Drinks

Try a small plastic bottle of water, milk or fresh fruit juice, preferably well diluted. Make a milkshake or smoothie by blending fresh fruit and milk.

Avoid flavoured water, sugary and/or fizzy drinks.

Fruit

Any fresh fruit is better than sweet biscuits or cakes. Remember – five-a-day.

Sandwiches

Vary the bread; wholemeal, multigrain, rolls, pitta or tortilla wraps. For variety, add salad (tomato, cucumber etc) to some of these fillings:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| • Cold meat (ham, chicken etc). | • Bacon. |
| • Cottage cheese. | • Tuna. |
| • Marmite. | • Paté. |
| • Banana. | • Egg. |
| • Cheese. | |

Avoid jam, chocolate spread or other processed fillers with added sugar.