There is much more to healthy teeth than just brushing and flossing. What children eat and what they don’t eat can also affect the health of their bones, teeth and gums. February is National Children’s Dental Health Month and now is a great time to remind them about the importance of good oral hygiene and how a nutritious diet full of fruits, vegetables and dairy foods can keep their teeth and gums healthy and strong. Children who still have all of their baby teeth (primary teeth) can benefit by developing good habits to reduce the risk of dental caries and oral pain.

The American Dietetic Association’s position on oral health states that dental caries are a major cause of tooth loss in the United States. Nearly 42% of children and adolescents (ages 6 to 19 years) have experienced tooth decay.

Consuming fewer sugary drinks and eating fewer sugar containing foods may lessen the time that teeth are exposed to sugar and help prevent cavities. Left on the teeth, sugar provides food for bacteria that create acid which can damage tooth enamel. Offer children water or low-fat milk instead of juice or other sweetened beverages when they are thirsty.

Vitamin C keeps teeth and gums healthy while vitamin D and calcium are needed for building strong teeth. Eating a well balanced diet full of fruits, vegetables and dairy can provide nutrients that help keep our teeth and gums healthy and strong.

(continued on page 3)
NUTRITION ACTIVITY

APPLE DECAY DEMONSTRATION

PURPOSE: Show how decay can spread through a hole in a tooth.

What You Need:
- Apple
- Knife
- Paper bag

Instructions:
1. Take an apple and make a hole one-inch deep in it. Put it in a paper bag and set aside for a few days.
2. With the children, cut through the place where the hole was made and have them look at the effect of decay.
3. Tell them about how decay can also spread through a tooth and the best way to prevent decay or cavities is to limit the consumption of sugar sweetened foods and beverages and practice good oral hygiene.
4. Explain why oral hygiene (brushing twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and flossing once a day) is important.

Source:

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

HOT POTATO

Just because it’s winter doesn’t mean you can’t get outside and avoid cabin fever. Make sure the children are dressed in layers and get out here for a fun game of Hot Potato!

What You Need:
- Kickball or soccer ball (the Hot Potato)

What to Do:
1. Have the children form a circle and spread out within an arms length of each other.
2. Choose one child to be “it”.
3. Keeping the ball on the ground, have the child who is “it” try to kick the ball out of the circle.
4. The other children can try to stop the ball with their feet and try to keep it “in the oven”.
5. If the ball is kicked out of the circle, then another leader is chosen.
6. Try to keep the Hot Potato in the oven!
BRUSH UP ON DENTAL HEALTH (CONTINUED)

(continued from page 1)

Each February, the American Dental Association (ADA) sponsors National Children’s Dental Health Month to raise awareness about the importance of oral health.

Keep in mind when planning meals for your students:

😊 Serve foods that contain calcium and vitamin D, such as dairy foods to promote strong teeth and bones.
😊 Serve foods that contain vitamin C, such as fruit to promote healthy gums and oral health.

Encourage parents to:

😊 Serve less sugary foods and drinks to prevent tooth decay.
😊 Brush and floss their children’s teeth regularly for good oral hygiene.

References:
• http://www.ada.org/sections/professionalResources/pdfs/sample_articles.pdf

COOKING ACTIVITY

YOGURT GRANOLA CRUNCH

What You Need:
• 1/2 cup of low-fat yogurt
• 1/2 cup of sliced kiwi (you could also use mandarin slices or frozen berries)
• 2 tablespoons of granola or whole grain cereal

Makes 1 serving

What to Do:
1. Mix the low fat yogurt and the kiwi in a bowl.
2. Sprinkle the granola or whole grain cereal on top.

Enjoy!

Nutrition Benefits of Yogurt
• Good source of calcium and protein

Nutrition Benefits of Kiwi
• High in vitamin c and potassium
Happy Healthy Me...Moving, Munching & Reading Around MyPlate for 4 to 6-Year-Olds
Combines stories and literacy with nutrition education for Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten.

Go Glow Grow
A preschool curriculum that teaches about healthy foods and what they do for the body.

Parent Workshops
Fun, interactive parent workshops are available. Please call for more information.

ROGER INGRAM
County Director

MYCHEL TEATER
UC CalFresh NEP Program

The UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program targets schools and community programs with large numbers of children from food stamp households. Teachers, youth program leaders, and other extenders at the sites are trained to deliver a nutrition education program targeted to youth audiences.

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