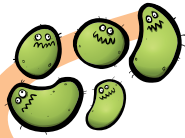


The Dental Decay Process



We all have germs in our mouths — some good and some bad. The bad germs and bacteria cause cavities.



Germs and bacteria can be spread from parents/ caregivers to infants and toddlers through saliva. (Do not share cups, eating utensils or food, and don't "clean off" pacifiers by putting them in your own mouth first.)



Sweet or high-carbohydrate foods or sweet drinks feed the germs that cause decay.



The germs make acids. The acids cause tooth decay. Tooth decay can be stopped if it is caught early.



Regular brushing with fluoridated toothpaste removes the germs. Fluoride helps stop the cavity-causing acids.



Tooth decay can be stopped if it is caught and treated early.

Putting It All Together

Giving Your Child a Lifetime of Oral Health



Good oral health comes from reducing the things that harm teeth and increasing the things that help teeth. By learning about dental decay, watching out for the things that can harm your child's teeth and doing the things you can to help your child's teeth, you will be giving your child the gift of a healthy smile.

What You Should Know About Germs

Did you know that germs cause cavities?

Germs can be spread to infants and toddlers through saliva. It is very important not to share cups, eating utensils or food with children. Do not "clean off" pacifiers by putting them in your own mouth first.

Sugary foods and drinks feed the germs that cause tooth decay. The germs make acids that cause cavities.

There is good news!

Regular brushing removes the germs. Saliva and fluoride stop the cavity-causing acids. Tooth decay can be stopped and even reversed if it is caught and treated early. See the chart on the next page to learn how to balance the cavity causers with the cavity fighters so you can help your child have a healthy smile.