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 **Portstewart
Family Dental**



LET'S GET READY FOR BACK TO SCHOOL

This September, Portstewart Family Dental offers all the tips and advice you need to make sure your kids teeth stay healthy.



With so many other things to think about on a school day, it's important to remember that a well-established oral hygiene routine matters. We want our children to be happy and successful at school.

TOOTHBRUSHING ROUTINE

Too many children miss days of school because of toothache. With good care, at least 95% of fillings can be avoided. So, help them get into the habit of brushing twice daily, last thing before bed and in the mornings.

If your child has orthodontic braces, it's also really important for them to carry a toothbrush and toothpaste to school. Travel packs are ideal, so that anytime they have eaten anything they can nip to the bathroom and clean off the debris around the braces that easily gets trapped.

HEALTHY LUNCH BOXES

So, what makes a healthy lunch that's also teeth friendly? The best kinds of teeth-friendly foods are ones that are:

- Low in sugar
 - Not acidic
 - Not sticky
 - Contain tooth friendly minerals such as calcium or phosphorus.
- And can stimulate saliva production

which helps neutralise acid and remineralise tooth enamel. Here we have gathered a list of healthy foods and ideas to help you pack a teeth friendly, healthy lunch, so you and your family can continue to eat well once the new school year starts.



Natural/Plain Yoghurt: Plain yoghurt without added sugar is an excellent snack for kids. It's packed with probiotics, high in calcium (which is great for teeth & bones) and keeps them feeling fuller for longer.

Dairy/Cheese: Cheese is a fantastic source to get calcium into your child's diet. Not only is it high in calcium and phosphorous which helps strengthen teeth and bones, it also helps neutralise the pH in the mouth which is important in

reducing your kids' risk for tooth decay.

Make it fun to eat: Chop a block of cheese into cubes for fun, bite-sized snacks – the smaller size help your kids digest better too!

Fresh Produce – Vegetables & Fruits: Crunchy, fibrous vegetables can act as a natural toothbrush and scrub away plaque from teeth. Some good veg snacks include pieces of carrot, celery or cucumber. Fruits such as apple and pear are very teeth friendly because of their high-water content, which helps dilute the fruit's natural sugars.

Not only do the high-water content of veggies and fruits rehydrates our bodies, it also dilutes natural sugars and washes away food particles while we eat.

Make it fun to eat: The easiest way to liven up raw veggies is to include a healthy dip such as hummus, cream cheese or fresh salsa. If time permits, use cookie cutters to cut up fruits into fun shapes for your kids.

Nuts & Seeds: Raw or roasted nuts (not the sugar/chocolate coated types!) are plant-based and great source of protein, calcium, vitamins and antioxidants. Nuts and seeds are also an excellent source of folic acid, which plays a major role in preserving gum tissues and preventing periodontal disease.

Water: Water is great for rinsing away debris as well as keeping your child hydrated. Keeping hydrated is crucial for health and well-being. Encourage your children to drink the recommended amount of water daily. Depending on their age, they should be having five to 10 glasses of water each day.

MOUTHGUARDS

Our general advice is that anyone engaged in sports should adopt a "No mouthguard no play" policy.

For best protection, a well-fitting mouthguard made by a dentist from models of your teeth, should be worn. These ensure that the bone above their front teeth is also given some level of protection.

This is not the case in shop-bought mouthguards.

Mouthguards are made of a rubber material and fit over your teeth and gums and there are several types. We always recommend custom-fitted because they offer the highest level of protection, but don't forget to ask for their name on it.

CUSTOM-FITTED

These offer the best comfort, fit and protection

They are more expensive than the other types

They are made by a dental technician to an exact mould taken by your dentist

They may be made in various colours with pictures and writing in some designs. These can even be in their favourite team's colours.

In growing children these may need to be replaced regularly

If, however, the worst happens and a child falls and knocks out a tooth, it's very important to know what to do, and to do it as quickly as possible. So, it's worth teaching your child these basic instructions:

KNOCKED A TOOTH OUT?

Don't panic!

I'm bleeding, what can I do?
Get a clean handkerchief and fold it up, then hold it over the socket and bite down. Keep your jaws together to apply pressure. If you need something for the pain, don't take any medication containing aspirin as this can cause the bleeding to get worse. Do not apply clove oil to the wound.

Until the next time....

Michele x

HERE'S WHAT TO DO TO HELP SAVE YOUR TOOTH

Step 1: Pick the tooth up by the crown only (do not touch the root)

Step 2: Only clean the tooth if it is dirty - rinse it in water or milk

Step 3: Stick the tooth back in position (adult teeth only)

*** Never try to re-insert a baby tooth ***

Step 4: Bite on a handkerchief to hold it in place

Step 5: Go straight to a dentist
If it's not possible to put the tooth back in position, put the tooth in milk and go straight to a dentist. If the tooth can be re-inserted within 30 mins to one hour, it has a better chance of survival.

So, break out the crayons and open the workbooks! Wishing all the kids a great year!