

Healthy Children

January 2018 Parent Newsletter



Articles

Promote Positive Mental Health with Nutrition

The Toothpaste Truth

Promote Positive Mental Health with Nutrition

Did you know there may be a link between what children eat and their mental health? Children need nutritious food to grow healthy bodies and healthy brains. Your brain uses natural chemicals called neurotransmitters as signals, affecting how you think, feel and act. The foods children eat can impact the release of neurotransmitters in the brain. To support positive mental health encourage your child to eat vegetables and fruit every day, and limit processed foods that are high in sugar, salt and fat. Offer water when they are thirsty and limit drinks with

added sugar and caffeine. There are simple ways you can help your child eat a healthy diet:

- Encourage your child to eat breakfast and lunch every day and not skip meals: eat regularly for all-day energy!
- Eat meals together: this allows you to serve nutritious food, role model healthy eating and enjoy social time as a family.
- At meal times plan a healthy plate by making half of your plate vegetables and fruit.



For more ideas visit <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutrition/Page12598.aspx>

Bacteria are becoming more resistant to the drugs we treat the disease with (antibiotics). Vaccination decreases the impact of this by preventing people from becoming infected with those resistant germs. Vaccination also means we don't have to treat people as often with antibiotics. For more information visit

<http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/86/2/07-040089/en/>



The Toothpaste Truth

It may be difficult to believe, but toothpaste doesn't actually clean your teeth! It's the motion of the toothbrush that removes the sticky film on our teeth, called 'plaque'. Similar to cleaning peanut butter off a spoon, no matter how much water or soap you use, only a brushing motion will successfully remove that sticky peanut butter. Test it out yourself! Use a dry toothbrush to clean your teeth and then use your tongue to feel your teeth. Were you able to make your teeth feel smooth without using toothpaste?

So why do we use toothpaste? Let's start with the most important reason.

Fluoride

The most essential component added to toothpaste is fluoride. Fluoride strengthens teeth and repairs damage caused by tooth decay acids. Brushing with fluoride toothpaste twice a day is an effective and low cost way to prevent tooth decay.



Freshens breath

Toothpaste contains mint or often some other flavoring. This flavoring makes toothpaste taste good and also helps to freshen your breath.

Addresses Special Needs

Specialty toothpastes contain specific ingredients to address needs like sensitive teeth.

So although toothpaste may not clean your teeth, it is important because it will keep your teeth strong and decay free.



For more information about oral health, visit

www.ahs.ca/oralhealth