

ORAL HEALTH AND DENTAL CARE IN CHILDREN

The following are some dental facts and tips to help in the care of our children's teeth;

- Children require regular dental check-ups from the age of two and a half. This is government funded through the school dental therapy system up until they go to high school, when a dentist on the government system can then see them. Private visits to your dentist are also an option.
- Accidents involving teeth should be registered with ACC through your dentist. This is very important no matter what age your child or how minor the accident, as trauma now may cause trouble in the future and registration at the time of the accident will ensure future cover. This is also government funded however a small surcharge may apply depending on the treatment required.
- If your child is playing contact sport, don't forget to ensure protection of their teeth with a good tight fitting mouthguard.
- Homecare of teeth is an especially important habit to instil in our children from the time of eruption of their first teeth. Homecare tips-
 - Twice daily brushing
 - Use of fluoride toothpaste from the age when the child can understand to spit out and not swallow the toothpaste. Up until this time a child's toothpaste should be used
 - To gain the most benefit from use of toothpaste it is good to 'spit out, not rinse out' to enable the toothpaste to continue working beyond brushing
 - Although flossing is not generally advocated for children it is a great idea to practise and again instil good habits from a young age, especially if your child has a history of decay
 - Electric toothbrushes are often a good way to encourage good effective and regular brushing habits.
- Diet and the effect it has on children's teeth are one of the main concerns we have here at the **Eastbourne Dental Centre**.
 - The main culprit is the sugar-laden drink eg. Fizzy drinks, energy drinks and juices
 - Water should be the drink of choice
 - It is very important to minimise 'sipping' or 'grazing' of these drinks and other sugary treats. And that is what they should be 'treats' not a regular occurrence in your child's diet
 - Sugar-free gum is a good adjunct to a good homecare regime

For any dental concerns for both children and adults alike, contact **Eastbourne Dental Centre** on ph. 562 7506