Don’t Lose Your Teeth!

Hey! Got a dirty mouth?
The best way to keep your teeth healthy is to brush and floss every day, and to see the dentist for regular check-ups.

Know why?
There are millions of bacteria living in your mouth. When these bacteria meet up with the carbohydrates in your foods, they form a kind of acid. This acid eats into the hard outer part of your teeth, and if you don’t wash the acid away it can lead to cavities.

Lots of foods have carbohydrates. Bread, potatoes, rice, candy, sweetened drinks, milk – even fruits and vegetables – are just a few common foods that have carbohydrates. But you can eat these foods and still help prevent cavities and have great teeth by following these easy tips:

• Brush your teeth in the morning after breakfast and in the evening after dinner. If you can, brush your teeth after lunch, too. Floss your teeth once a day, too.
• Use a toothpaste with fluoride in it. Fluoride is a mineral that helps protect your teeth from getting cavities.
• If you are at school and can’t brush your teeth after you eat, rinse your mouth out with water to wash away at least some of the food on your teeth.
• Try to cut back on the number of times per day that you snack. Each time you eat food that contains carbohydrates, acids attack your teeth for 20 minutes or more.
• Foods that stick to your teeth or get stuck between your teeth can hang around longer and produce acid that may lead to cavities. Some examples are potato chips, raisins or granola bars. Try to brush your teeth or rinse your mouth out right away to remove “sticky” foods from your teeth.
• Don’t be boring. Eat lots of different kinds of food by following MyPyramid.

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