

The Sweet Tooth

Children are born with a sweet tooth. They tend to prefer sweet foods. Many of these foods are high in sugar – cookies, candy, cake, pie and soda.

We enjoy a variety of foods. However, some children can eat too many sweets.

Too much sugar can cause problems for small children such as:

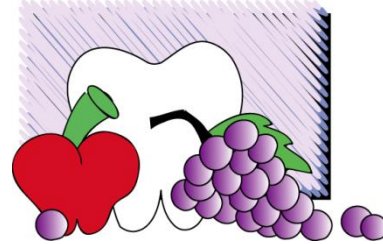
Tooth Decay – Children who eat lots of sweets are more likely to have cavities.

Overweight – Sweets can add up to a lot of extra calories. An average preschooler needs 1600 calories each day. One can of soda and a candy bar can have 500 calories.

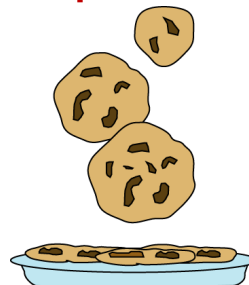
Fussy Eaters – Sweets can ruin an appetite fast! Some children will prefer sweet foods and refuse to eat healthy foods.

Help your child develop healthy eating habits

- ♥ Keep sweets out of the house. If your child sees soda in the refrigerator or candy in the cupboard, he will want it. Most children will keep asking for sweets if they know there are sweets in the house.
- ♥ Don't eat a lot of sweets yourself. Your child will want to eat what he sees you and others enjoying.



- ♥ Enjoy eating smaller servings of sweet foods. Cut bars, cakes and pies into smaller pieces. Enjoy a half serving of dessert. Make smaller cookies. Avoid the king size candy bars. Buy smaller pieces of candy.
- ♥ Offer nutritious snacks with a natural sweet taste. Bananas, apples, grapes, cherries, mandarin oranges, canned fruits, dried fruits, raisins and fruit flavored yogurts make great snacks.
- ♥ Limit sweet drinks such as soda and fruit drinks. Drink water. Encourage your child to enjoy the fresh taste of water.
- ♥ Limit fruit juice to 6 ounces or less each day. Some children will fill their small tummy with sweet juices and refuse to eat.



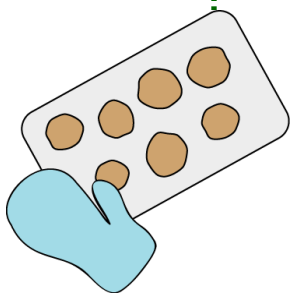
Holiday Baking

Many families have traditional sweets that they love to bake and eat. Traditions are important for families.

Healthy eating during the holidays can be difficult. These sweets can be high in fat and calories.

Make healthy choices when baking for the holidays:

- ♥ **Bake less.** Bake smaller batches of your favorite sweets. Make single batches of cookies and candy. Avoid the temptation to double or triple recipes.
- ♥ **Bake less variety.** If you usually bake 6 different types of cookies and candy, choose your family's favorite 3 or 4. We tend to eat more when there is a large variety because we "want to taste them all".
- ♥ **Make smaller cookies.** Cut candy into small pieces. Your sweets will go further and you will eat less.
- ♥ **Freeze sweets before the holidays.** They will be out of sight and less tempting to eat.
- ♥ **Give away sweets.** Your homemade cookies and candies will make great gifts for family, friends and neighbors.



Choose recipes that have ingredients with nutrition:

- ♥ Peanut Butter
- ♥ Dried Fruits
- ♥ Dry Breakfast Cereals and Oatmeal

Choose cereals low in sugar and high in fiber and nutrition!

Shopping with Children

Plan the right time to shop

Shop when your children are not hungry. Plan your trips to the store after eating at home.

Shop when your children are not tired. Don't shop during nap time. Be rested yourself.

It is easier to shop with children when you are not tired.

Limit the shopping time

Small children usually do not like to shop for long periods of time. You know best how much time your child can tolerate. Don't shop too long!

Don't bribe your child with food or treats to shop

Let your child learn that shopping is a fun family time. If you bribe your child to shop, he will learn that shopping is an awful time that he needs to be forced to do.

Prevent Begging

Bring a shopping list and stick to it. If your child begs for a treat, simply say it isn't on the list.

Talk about the foods you are buying

Ask your child what fruit he would like to eat. Ask your child to help you find the milk, potatoes, bread or meat – even if you know where it is. He will be busy looking for it. When choosing milk, ask your child to help you find the "pink" or "blue" bottle.

