

# University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources

Making a Difference for California

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## PRESCHOOL NUTRITION NEWS

UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program

### HEALTHY PRESCHOOL TEETH

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
cal<sup>2</sup>fresh Nutrition Education



**T**here is much more to healthy teeth than just brushing and flossing. What children eat and what they don't eat can also affect the health of their bones, teeth and gums.

February is National Children's Dental Health Month and now is a great time to remind them about the importance of good oral hygiene and how a nutritious diet full of fruits, vegetables, and dairy foods can keep their teeth and gums healthy and strong.

Children who still have all of their baby teeth (primary teeth) can benefit by developing good habits to reduce the risk of dental caries and oral pain.



The American Dietetic Association's position on oral health states that dental caries are a major cause of tooth loss in the United States. Nearly 42% of children and adolescents (ages 6 to 19 years) have experienced tooth decay.

Consuming fewer sugary drinks and eating fewer sugar containing foods may lessen the time that teeth are exposed to sugar and help prevent cavities. Left on the teeth, sugar provides food for bacteria that create acid which can damage tooth enamel.

Offer children water or low-fat milk instead of juice or other

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#### Winter 2018

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#### More Resources

**Visit our website:**  
<http://ceplacer.ucanr.edu>

You can email a UC CalFresh representative with any questions or information needs. Also, please feel free to share any tips or suggestions you might have with other teachers!

## ACTIVITY

## APPLE DECAY

Show how decay can spread through a hole in a tooth.

### What You Need:

- ★ Apple
- ★ Knife
- ★ Paper bag



### Instructions:

1. Take an apple and make a hole one-inch deep in it. Put it in a paper bag and set aside for a few days.
2. With the children, cut through the place where the hole was made and have them look at the effect of decay.
3. Tell them about how decay can also spread through a tooth. Explain the best way to prevent decay or cavities is to limit the consumption of sugar sweetened foods and beverages and practice good oral hygiene.
4. Explain why oral hygiene (brushing twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and flossing once a day) is important.

## HEALTHY PRESCHOOL TEETH (CONTINUED)

*(Continued from page 1)*

sweetened beverages when they are thirsty.

Vitamin C keeps teeth and gums healthy while vitamin D and calcium are needed for building strong teeth. Eating a well balanced diet full of fruits, vegetables and dairy can provide nutrients that help keep children's teeth and gums healthy and strong.

### Help keep preschool teeth strong:

- ☺ Serve foods that contain calcium and vitamin D, such as dairy foods to promote strong teeth and bones.
- ☺ Serve foods that contain vitamin C, such as fruit to promote healthy gums and oral health.

### Encourage parents to:

- ☺ Serve less sugary foods and drinks to prevent tooth decay.
- ☺ Brush and floss their children's teeth regularly for good oral hygiene.

## RECIPE

## YOGURT GRANOLA CRUNCH

### What You Need:

- 1/2 cup of low-fat yogurt
- 1/2 cup of sliced kiwi (you could also use mandarin slices or frozen berries)
- 2 tablespoons of granola or whole grain cereal

### What to Do:

1. Mix the low-fat yogurt and the kiwi in a bowl.
2. Sprinkle the granola or whole grain cereal on top.
3. Enjoy!

*Makes 1 serving*

### Nutrition Benefits of Yogurt

- ☺ Good source of calcium and protein

### Nutrition Benefits of Kiwi

- ☺ High in vitamin C and potassium

## FOOD FOR HEALTHY TEETH

**For good dental health, keep these tips in mind when preparing healthy meals and snacks:**

- Drink plenty of water.
- Choose whole grains.
- Choose plenty of fruits and vegetables.
- Choose lean sources of protein such as lean beef, skinless poultry, and fish; dry beans, peas and other legumes.
- Choose low-fat dairy foods.



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**Happy Healthy Me...Moving, Munching &  
Reading Around MyPlate for 4 to 6-Year-Olds**  
Combines stories and literacy with nutrition  
education for Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten.

### Parent Workshops

Fun, interactive parent workshops are  
available. Please call for more information.

### Go Glow Grow

A preschool curriculum that teaches about  
healthy foods and what they do for the body.

**CINDY FAKE**  
County Director

**KELLEY BRIAN, MPH**  
Youth, Families and Communities Advisor

**MICHELE FISCH**  
UC CalFresh Nutrition Educator

The UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program targets schools and community programs with large numbers of children from food stamp households. Teachers, youth program leaders, and other extenders at the sites are trained to deliver a nutrition education program targeted to youth audiences. This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program -- SNAP.

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