

PREVENTING TOOTH DECAY

TOOTH TRUTH

Teeth have a protective outer layer called **enamel**. This layer is harder than bone and **protects the tooth like a helmet**.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

Avoid **acidic, sour or sweet foods and drinks**, which can eat away at the enamel on your teeth.



TOOTH TRUTH

Cavities (or decay) are caused by bacteria. Without intervention, **bacteria in the mouth will double every five hours**.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

Brush at least twice a day to clean the bacteria off the teeth and tongue.

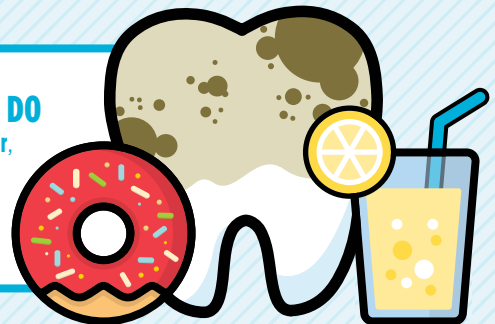


TOOTH TRUTH

Bacteria eat sugar.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

Avoid diets high in **sugar**, which increase the amount of bacteria in your mouth.



TOOTH TRUTH

As bacteria eat, they produce acid that **breaks down the enamel** in a process called **demineralization**.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

Use **fluoride toothpastes**, which can help reverse some of the damage.



TOOTH TRUTH

If you can **catch a cavity early**, before it breaks through the hard enamel, it is much **easier to prevent more serious problems**.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

Getting **regular checkups (at least twice a year)** helps make sure you catch these problems early before anything bad happens.

