



Eat a healthy diet

A healthy diet helps prevent cavities. Here are some suggestions:

- Eat foods and drink fluids that have fluoride in them such as fish, tea, grape juice, and green leafy vegetables.
- Eat fruits and berries that have a natural sweetener called Xylitol. Xylitol helps fight cavities.
- Drink lots of water, preferably fluoridated. (Bottled water usually does not contain fluoride.)
- Chew Xylitol gum. As a Delta Dental member, you can receive a discount on Xylitol gum at www.epicdental.com/deltamass.

Visit your dentist regularly

If you have had a cavity recently, you should revisit your dentist every six months for an oral exam and cleaning.



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*Good nutrition will
help protect your
healthy smile.*

Have you had a cavity recently?

If so, you are more likely to get another.

What causes cavities?

Cavities are formed by acid on your teeth, called plaque. When you eat sugary or starchy foods, the bacteria mixes with it and forms acid. The acid attacks your tooth enamel, which is the hard outside surface of your teeth. Eventually this forms a cavity.

How can I avoid more cavities?

There are lots of ways to reduce your risk of more cavities.

Brush the right way

You may brush your teeth often, but you might not be brushing correctly. And that may leave plaque on your teeth. Here are some simple tips that make a big difference:

- Brush for a minimum of two minutes, twice a day, with fluoride toothpaste.
- Brush your teeth after eating sugary or starchy food.
- Brush each tooth in a small, circular motion.
- Use a toothbrush with soft bristles.
- Replace your toothbrush every two months or when the bristles are frayed and worn.

Floss daily

Flossing removes food trapped between teeth. It reduces plaque and helps your gums stay healthy too. Flossing is an important tool in cavity prevention. You should floss once a day.

Eat foods that provide the vitamins and minerals needed for good oral health.



Vitamin	How it affects your mouth	Found in these foods
Vitamin A (carotene)	Prevents dry mouth and oral cancer	Broccoli, brussels sprouts, green leafy vegetables (spinach, collard greens, kale, etc.)
Vitamin C (ascorbic acid)	Prevents soft, bleeding gums and loose teeth. Prevents oral cancer	Citrus fruits, cantaloupe, strawberries, green leafy vegetables, bell peppers
Vitamin D	Promotes strong teeth and jaw bones	Oily fish, milk, eggs, cereals
Vitamin E	Prevents growth of thick white patches in the mouth (leukoplakia). Prevents oral cancer	Vegetable oil, nuts, peanut butter, wheat germ
B2, Niacin, B6 B12 Folic Acid	Prevents soreness, redness, and bleeding of the gums, and cracking and sores in the corners of the mouth and on the tongue	Salmon, beef, liver, chicken, fish, yogurt, nuts, and beans Breakfast cereals, spinach, navy beans, orange juice, pasta, rice
Calcium Phosphorous Magnesium	Needed for tooth development, prevents loss of jawbone and teeth, rebuilds hard surfaces of the teeth (enamel)	Milk, cheese, yogurt, seafood, dark green leafy vegetables
Fluoride	Prevents tooth decay, helps repair enamel	Fluoridated water, black tea, sardines
Zinc	Needed for digestion, healing cold and canker sores	Liver, various meats, eggs, seafood, whole-grain cereals
Iodine	Needed for tooth development	Iodized salt, seafood, kelp, saltwater fish
Copper	Absorbs iron. Helps produce blood and nerve fibers	Liver, kidney, seafood, nuts, seeds, tap water
Iron	Protects against oral cancer and helps the immune system	Liver, eggs, fish, seafood, various other meats, enriched breads and cereals, green leafy vegetables
Potassium	Needed for nerve function and muscle contractions	Vegetables, legumes, fruits, milk, cheese, various meats, whole grains