



## Preventing Your Child's Cavities

The top dental problem among preschoolers is tooth decay. By age five, nearly 50% of children have one or more cavities.

We want to keep your child's teeth healthy and clean.

### Common Misconceptions:

- What are cavities?
  - ✗ Germs/plaque/"sugar bugs"
  - ✗ "Stuff" that eats your teeth.
  - ✓ Cavities are "holes" in your teeth.
- How do they happen?
  - ✗ Food/sugar breaks teeth.
  - ✗ Teeth break because they are dirty.
  - ✓ Acid-producing bacteria is the cause of cavities. Natural or added sugars in your children's food and drinks change to acid by bacteria in the mouth. This acid can melt the teeth and create dental cavities.

## Prevention of Cavities

- Teach your child to brush twice a day. The most important time to brush is at night, after the last meal because you brush off the (1) food, (2) germs, and (3) acid.
- Limit sweet or sticky foods in your child's diet.
- Establish a "dental home" for regular dental checkups.

*Remember: "Slime and grime make the crime"*

- Dr. Larry Hon, Nevada AAP Oral Health Advocate

