



"Inspiring Better Health for All"

Forest County Health Department
200 E Madison Street
Crandon, WI 54520
Phone: 715-478-3371
Fax: 715-478-5171

<http://forestcountypublichealth.org/>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Tammi Boers, Health Director, 715-478-3371 or tammiboersdirector@co.forest.wi.us

February is National Children's Dental Health Month

Now more than ever, kids are faced with a wide variety of food choices, from fresh produce to sugary processed meals and snack foods. Forest County Health Department would like to recognize National Children's Dental Health Month by reminding families that what and when children eat can affect their oral health.

Americans are consuming foods and drinks high in sugar and starches more often and in larger amounts than ever before. In the U.S., on average, people consume approximately 50 gallons of sugary beverages per year! A steady diet of sugary foods and drinks can ruin teeth, especially those who snack throughout the day.

Sugar on teeth provides food for bacteria, which produce acid. The acid then eats away the enamel on teeth. Here are ways to lower you and your child's risk of tooth decay:

- Sugary foods and drinks should be consumed with meals. Saliva production increases during meals and helps lower the amount of acid made as well as rinses food particles from the mouth.
- Limit between-meal snacks. If kids crave a snack, offer them nutritious foods.
- If your kids chew gum, make it sugarless. Chewing sugarless gum after eating can increase saliva flow and help wash out food and decay-producing acid.
- Watch what your child is drinking. Children should make healthy beverage choices such water and low-fat milk.
- Read food labels to see the amount of carbohydrates (which includes sugar and starches) are in foods. Also look for any added sugars in the ingredient list. Choose foods with no to low amounts of carbohydrates and no added sugar.
- Help your children develop good brushing and flossing habits.
- Schedule regular dental visits

If you would like more information, please contact Forest County Health Department at 715-478-3371 or visit us at <https://forestcountypublichealth.org/>

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