

# WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO PRIORITIZE YOUR KIDS' ORAL HEALTH

A healthy mouth helps them thrive



There's been so much going on that your kids' oral health might not be top of mind right now. February is Children's Dental Health Month, so it's a good reminder to schedule a check-up and focus on improving their oral health at home.

## Brush 2x a day for 2 minutes

Brushing for two minutes with fluoride toothpaste helps reduce plaque and avoid cavities.<sup>1</sup>

Two minutes can be a lot for a child, so try a fun app. The Disney Magic Timer app by Oral-B brings along favorite characters, and the Toothsavers Brushing Game involves an exciting adventure.

## Reduce sugars

Eating or drinking something sugary creates acid that can lead to tooth decay.<sup>2</sup> If your kid has a sugary food, have them drink water after. And have them use a reusable straw for sugary drinks.

## Encourage healthy snacks

Mouth-healthy snacks include cheese sticks, nuts, low-sugar yogurts, veggies and apples.<sup>2</sup>

## Get 2 dental check-ups a year

Getting regular cleanings and X-rays can help keep your child's mouth healthy and catch any problems while they're still small.

## Kids who get dental check-ups have:

- ▶ Increased self-confidence<sup>3</sup> and resilience<sup>4</sup>
- ▶ Fewer missed school days – Kids in the U.S. miss more than 34 million hours of school due to dental problems<sup>5</sup>, and kids with poor oral health are nearly three times more likely to miss school due to dental pain<sup>6</sup>
- ▶ 23% fewer ER visits<sup>7</sup>
- ▶ 31% lower dental costs<sup>8</sup>



## Schedule a dental check-up today.

Looking for an in-network dentist? Find one at [myCigna.com](https://myCigna.com).



## Flip this page over for a fun coloring activity for your kids.

Together, all the way.<sup>®</sup>



Offered by: Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company, Connecticut General Life Insurance Company or their affiliates.

1 Raypole, Crystal. 5 Toothbrushing FAQs. 1 Apr. 2019, [www.healthline.com/health/how-long-should-you-brush-your-teeth-2](http://www.healthline.com/health/how-long-should-you-brush-your-teeth-2).

2 Lin, Steve. The Effects of Snacking on Your Teeth. Verywell Health, 23 Oct. 2020, [www.verywellhealth.com/is-your-snacking-habit-bad-for-your-teeth-3866373](http://www.verywellhealth.com/is-your-snacking-habit-bad-for-your-teeth-3866373).

3 "Exploring the relationship between oral health and mental wellbeing." Cigna research study, October 2019.

4 Development of Resilience Links Parenting and Childhood Dental Caries, International Association for Dental Research, 2020, <https://iadr.abstractarchives.com/abstract/20iags-3304612/development-of-resilience-links-parenting-and-childhood-dental-caries>

5 Naavaal S, and Kelekar U. School Hours Lost Due to Acute/Unplanned Dental Care. Health Behav Policy Rev 2018;5(2):66-73. <https://www.ingentaconnect.com/contentone/psp/hbpr/2018/00000005/00000002/art00007?crawler=true&mimetype=application/pdf>.

6 The State of Dental Health, Children's Dental Health Project, [www.cdhp.org/state-of-dental-health/schoolandbeyond#:~:text=Impact%20of%20Tooth%20Decay%3A&text=Children%20with%20poor%20oral%20health,children%20from%20economically%20vulnerable%20families](http://www.cdhp.org/state-of-dental-health/schoolandbeyond#:~:text=Impact%20of%20Tooth%20Decay%3A&text=Children%20with%20poor%20oral%20health,children%20from%20economically%20vulnerable%20families).

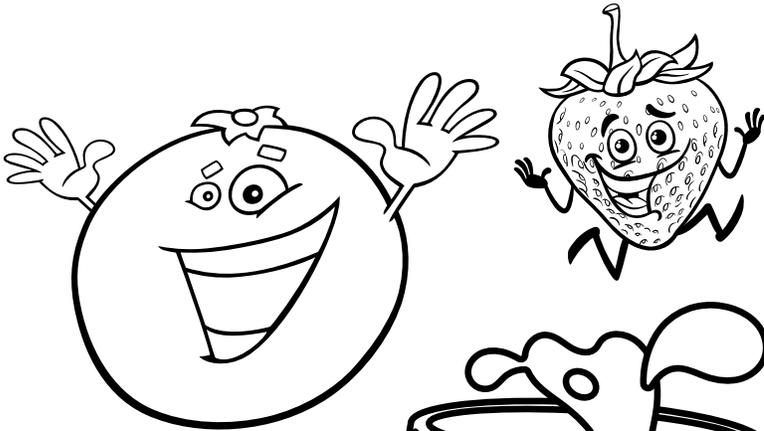
7 "Preventive Dental Treatment Associated with Lower Medical Utilization and Costs." National Cigna study, 2018.

8 "Long-term Dental Care and Its Impact on Dental Costs." National Cigna study, August 2018.



# Hi, kids! I'm Mikey Molar

I have a few easy tips for a brighter, healthier smile.



## Limit sugar

Candy, soda and sports drinks taste good, but they are bad for your teeth. Try to have them as special treats, but not every day.

## Eat healthy

Snacks like apples and cheese sticks are yummy and good for your mouth.

## Drink up

Drinking water helps keep your teeth nice and clean. It's like a shower for your mouth.

## Brush for 2 minutes 2x a day

That might seem like a long time, but it's important to keep your teeth healthy.

## Floss every day

That way, you can get out any food that's stuck between your teeth.

**You got this!**  
**Now let's color.**

