

One Tooth, Two Teeth, Clean Teeth, Good Teeth... join the cavity free generation!

My name is ONE-TOOTH, and I want to talk to you about your teeth.

Do you know why you have them? It's because they help you chew food easily, speak clearly, and they improve the way you look.

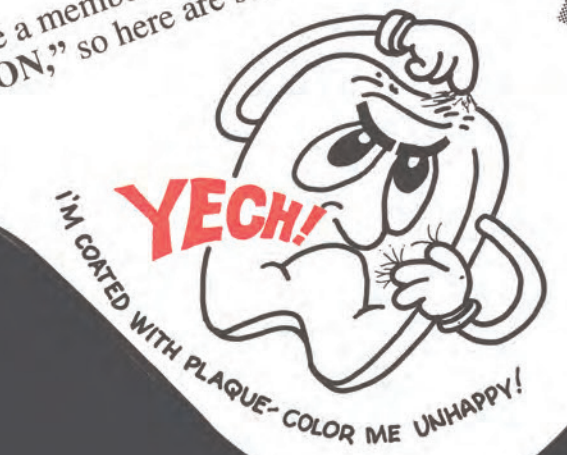
You were only about six months old when your **FIRST** teeth started appearing. Taking care of these first teeth is important because your **SECOND** teeth are copycats—if your first teeth aren't healthy, your second teeth might follow the leader. So, now that you're old enough, you can help care for that great smile of yours. And it's not hard at all.

I bet you've been told to brush and floss your teeth after eating. If you don't, the cavity making machine goes to work.

Every single day, a sticky, colorless film forms in your mouth. It's called **PLAQUE**, and it's made of bacteria or germs. Ugh! After you eat, tiny bits of food are left clinging to your teeth. The **BACTERIA** in the plaque use this food to make **ACIDS**, and these acids attack the enamel or shiny white covering of your teeth. The next thing you know, you have a **CAVITY**. **O-U-C-H!!!**

Now, I know you want to become a member of the **"CAVITY FREE GENERATION,"** so here are some pointers.

- The first one is your very own**
- "MOUTH FITNESS PROGRAM"**
- YOU WILL NEED:**
- 1 new toothbrush with soft bristles (which you should change after 6 months)
 - Fluoride toothpaste —approved by the American Dental Association
 - Dental floss
 - Mirror
 - An adult to supervise



Are you ready? Well then, let's begin.

1. Squeeze a pea-sized amount of toothpaste onto your toothbrush.



2. Hold the brush bristles at about a 45-degree angle and move the brush back and forth with short, gentle strokes. Brush all surfaces of your teeth—outer, inner, and chewing.

Now it's time to **FLOSS** and catch the bits of food and plaque your brush missed between your teeth and under your gums.

1. Take about 16 inches of **DENTAL FLOSS**, and using your thumbs and forefingers, slide the floss between your teeth until it reaches your gumline... gently now. (You also can tie the floss in a circle to make it easier to handle.)

2. For each tooth, move the floss so it forms the letter "C" around each tooth, and gently, scrape up and down. **Good job!** Give yourself a smile as a reward.

3. Next, clean the inside surfaces of your front teeth by tilting your toothbrush and making several short up-and-down strokes.



4. Gently brush the inside of your cheeks and the top of your tongue.

5. Rinse your mouth with water.



Sometimes

after brushing, ask your parents to give you a "DISCLOSING TABLET." Chew it and wait a minute. Then look at the areas that are stained the color of the tablet. These are places you missed in your workout. Brush and floss again to remove the color, and remember to pay special attention to these areas of your teeth during your next workout.

Question: Do you know what special person helps you to avoid cavities?
Answer: One of my best friends who should be one of yours as well. The person with a special interest in caring for children's teeth—your dentist!

Your dentist examines your teeth and gums, cleans and polishes your teeth, fills cavities when you get them, and cheers you on to becoming cavity-free.

Your dentist also helps protect your teeth with FLUORIDE TREATMENTS and SEALANTS. Fluoride also is put in water and toothpaste to help prevent cavities and make your teeth stronger. And sealants... hmmm... how can I describe them? I've got it! They're like a raincoat for teeth and keep those cavity-making acids from getting through your tooth enamel.

Ask your dentist questions. Remember, dentists who work often with children help keep teeth like me and like yours clean and healthy.

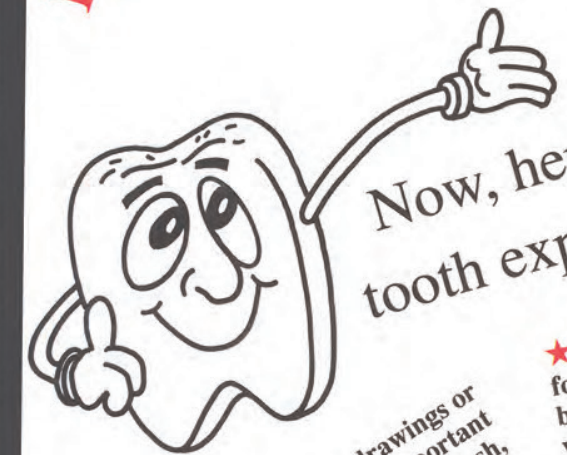
The way you eat also affects your teeth. If you snack a lot and don't brush afterward, there always will be fuel for the cavity-making machine. Foods that are sticky or gummy really hang onto your teeth. Starchy foods, like crackers, chips and cereal, and foods with sugars in them, like dried fruits, candy and cookies, also can be a problem. One solution is to brush after *every time* you eat. Another is not to snack often.



BUT I'M NOT TELLING YOU THAT YOU CAN'T EAT THESE FOODS AT ALL.

Absolutely not! Why I bet these are some of your favorite foods! And I also know that many of these foods are good for you.

I am telling you to eat those foods as part of your meals each day more often than as snacks. Why? Because after meals you brush and floss your teeth. Another reason is there's more saliva in your mouth during meals, and saliva helps fight cavities as well.



Let's have a quick review. ✓ Good dental hygiene and regular visits to your dentist are important to keeping your teeth healthy.
 ✓ Eat a variety of foods at mealtime, and brush and floss after eating.

Now, here are **TEETH ACTIVITIES** from the tooth expert—**ME**

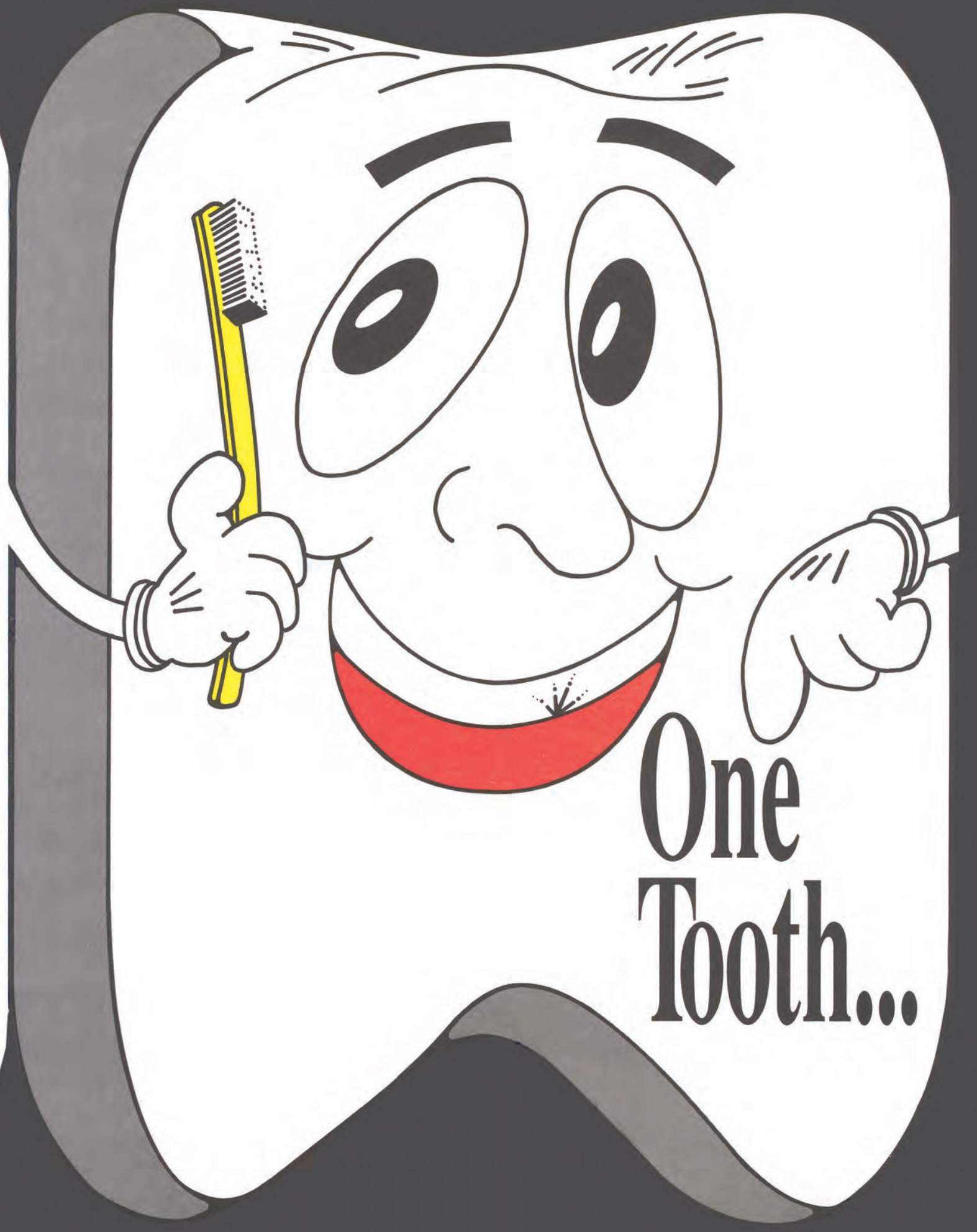
- ★ Make a collage from drawings or cutouts of all of the things important to having healthy teeth: toothbrush, dental floss, toothpaste, dentist, etc.
- ★ Plan a healthy meal, including food from all four food groups, either by yourself, with a friend or with your parents. You can draw a picture of a healthy dinner or cut out pictures of food from magazines and paste them on paper.
- ★ Write or draw a story of your visit to the dentist. After each visit, do one picture or page. Soon, you'll have your own book. Do this with friends so you can compare visits to the dentist.
- ★ Make your own workout chart to hang on the bathroom wall. Draw pictures to go with each step. Share this chart with your sisters, brothers, friends and parents.
- ★ Practice brushing and flossing on dolls or stuffed animals.
- ★ How do sealants work? Cover a toy or plate with plastic wrap and hold under or dip into water or other substances such as flour or pancake mix.

That's all for now. Good luck, and remember, clean teeth are healthy teeth.



Reviewed by Charles D. Klass, D.D.S., Diplomate of the American Board of Pediatric Dentistry and Member of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, American Dental Association, California Society of Pediatric Dentistry and The California Dental Association.

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