

# Nutrition

## A balanced diet

Eating right needs to be a daily habit, just like brushing and flossing.

Eating a balanced diet will help boost your body's immune system, so you will be less vulnerable to oral disease. It will also provide you with the nutrients your body needs to maintain strong teeth and healthy gums.

So what is a balanced diet? It includes plenty of fruits and vegetables, moderate portions of protein, complex carbohydrates like whole grains and beans, low-fat dairy products and unsaturated fats.



*Healthy meal*



*One soda = 10-12 tsp of sugar*

## Frequency and timing

Good nutrition plays a large role in your dental health, and that includes what you eat and how often you eat. Every time you eat a sweet or starchy food, the bacteria in your mouth feast on it and produce acids that attack your teeth.

An acid attack can last 20 minutes or longer, until your saliva is able to help neutralize the acids and repair the enamel on your teeth. So, the more often you eat, the more your teeth are exposed to these acids, and the less time there is for saliva to do its job. Eventually, the acids dissolve the tooth enamel and cause decay.



## Food suggestions

You should limit the amount of sodas you drink and other beverages that contain sugar.

One of the main causes of tooth decay is soda. A 12-ounce can of soda contains about 12 teaspoons of sugar. Soda also contains phosphoric and citric acids that dissolve the protective layer of enamel on your teeth.

Combining starches and sweets in a meal with proteins and fats helps stimulate saliva production. So, if you eat dessert, eat it with your meal, not sometime afterwards.

It has also been found that certain foods like nuts, cheese, onions, and many teas actually slow the decay process.

To maximize your nutrition and your dental health, eat a well-balanced diet. Limit sugary, starchy and sticky foods and drinks, and avoid between-meal snacking.