



Healthy Smiles this Autumn

Simple oral health tips for Barnsley families



An Autumn message for parents and carers

If your family is celebrating Halloween, we know that is a fun time for children, and sweets are often part of the celebrations. A few simple choices can help children enjoy Halloween while also looking after their teeth.

Enjoy treats, protect teeth

- Keep sweets to one time, rather than letting children snack on them repeatedly throughout the day.
- Offer sweets with or just after a meal where possible.
- Choose water or plain milk between meals.
- Avoid sweets just before bedtime. Brush teeth last thing at night and do not eat or drink afterwards, except water.
- Consider non-food treats too, such as stickers, pencils, a small book or choosing a family activity.



Top tips and useful facts

- Brush twice a day: Brush for about two minutes, last thing at night and on one other occasion.
- Use fluoride toothpaste: Use toothpaste suitable for your child's age. Check the pack if you are unsure.
- Spit, do not rinse: Rinsing washes away the fluoride left on the teeth after brushing.
- Help with brushing: Children up to age 7 benefit from an adult supervising or helping them brush.
- Choose tooth-friendly drinks: Water and plain milk are the best everyday choices for teeth.
- Visit a dentist: Arrange regular dental check-ups. Ask your dentist whether fluoride varnish would be suitable for your child.
- Find an [NHS dentist](#)

The most important message

Brush teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, including last thing at night. After brushing, spit out the toothpaste but do not rinse with water.

Lunchbox and snack swaps

- Small swaps can help reduce how often teeth are exposed to sugar during the day.
- Water or plain milk instead of sugary drinks
- Fresh fruit or vegetable sticks
- Cheese or plain yoghurt
- Plain rice cakes or plain popcorn instead of sweets or chocolate bars
- For portions and packed lunch ideas, view the Barnsley Council [Packed Lunch Toolkit](#).

Could your child's setting run a Supervised Toothbrushing Club?

A Supervised Toothbrushing Club gives children the opportunity to brush their teeth once a day at school or nursery using fluoride toothpaste, with trained staff supervising. It supports, but does not replace, brushing twice a day at home.

Ask your child's school or nursery: "Do you take part in a Supervised Toothbrushing Club?"

Read the parent [leaflet](#).

Your family's healthy smile checklist

- ☐ Brush morning and bedtime
- ☐ Use fluoride toothpaste
- ☐ Spit, do not rinse
- ☐ Choose water or plain milk between meals
- ☐ Keep sweet foods and drinks to mealtimes where possible
- ☐ Attend regular dental check-ups
- ☐ Ask your dentist about fluoride varnish

Remember

Halloween is one day. Focus on the routine that happens every day: brushing twice daily, using fluoride toothpaste and keeping sugary foods and drinks to mealtimes where possible.



Questions? Contact the Children and Young People's Public Health Team

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