

Nurse's Corner

Spirit Lake Community Schools

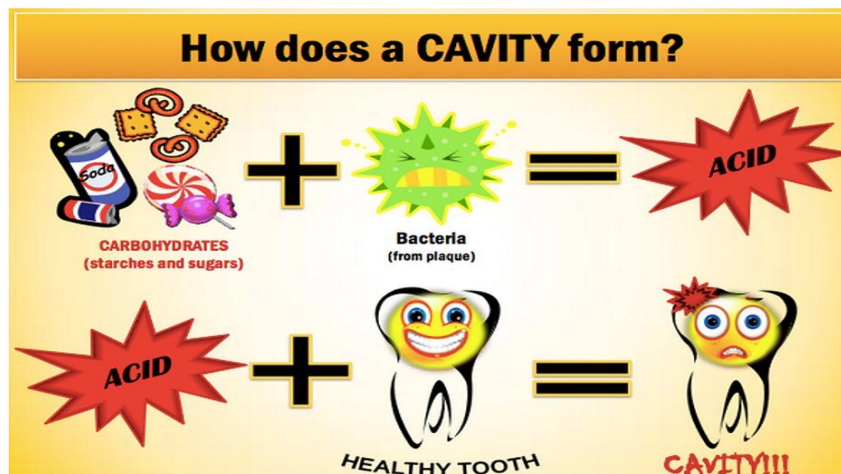
Spirit Lake School Nurses are committed to promoting the health and well-being of all students so that they may achieve academic success and develop lifelong healthy habits!

Did you know that February is National Children's Dental Health Month? Let's shine a light on the importance of good dental hygiene and show some love to our teeth this month!

Cavities (also known as caries or tooth decay) are the most common chronic disease of childhood. Yet, most cavities are preventable! If left untreated, tooth decay can cause serious problems with eating, speaking and learning.

How does tooth decay happen?

Three things are needed for tooth decay to occur: a tooth, carbohydrates (like sweets or starches), and bacteria. Bacteria use the sweet and starchy foods in the mouth to make acid. After repeated exposure to acid, the tooth enamel begins to break down and a hole (cavity) forms in the tooth.



What can I do to prevent tooth decay?

- Limit soda pop and juice - sipping on sugary drinks throughout the day causes repeated acid attacks on your teeth.
- Limit sticky foods like chewy candy, chips, and dried fruit that cling to the teeth and increase acid attacks on your teeth.
- Limit hard candies, mints and cough drops that stay in the mouth a long time and cause repeated acid attacks. Choose sugar-free if possible.
- Brush your teeth for 2 minutes 2x daily with a fluoride toothpaste.
- Drink water after eating to rinse your mouth out when you cannot brush your teeth.
- Use dental floss to clean between your teeth at least once daily.
- Visit your dentist twice per year.

Need help with obtaining access to dental care for your children?

- Please contact Dickinson County I-Smile Coordinator Dawn Ericson at 712-229-2181 or visit <https://hhs.iowa.gov/programs/programs-and-services/dental-and-oral-health/i-smile> for more information.

Ideas to promote good dental health for your children:

- Great Lakes Dental Associates invites you to watch this important video with your children on caring for teeth and why oral hygiene matters:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EKqBq2_MxwY

Use a stopwatch or a sand timer set to two minutes when you brush your teeth!

- Print out this calendar to help your child keep track of their teeth brushing:
https://www.ada.org/-/media/Project/ADA%20Organization/ADA/ADA-org/Files/Community-Initiatives/National%20Childrens%20Dental%20Health%20Month/2024_NCDHM_Calendar_English

Attitudes and habits established at an early age are critical in maintaining good oral health throughout life!

If you have any questions, please contact the school nurses:

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