



Dental Health Reminders





Tuesday, April 20, 2010


Dear Parents,

Last week Dr. Hong, a pediatric dentist, visited ECLC to teach children about caring for their teeth. The children enjoyed learning about when to brush their teeth, healthy and harmful foods for teeth, as well as how to brush their teeth. The children all received a new toothbrush with toothpaste to use at home.

Dr. Hong would like to offer a few reminders when caring for children's teeth...

 **Oral Hygiene**- Children need to brush three times a day – after breakfast, after lunch (or after coming home from school), and before going to bed. It's important to check the result of a child's tooth brushing at night. Due to limited manual dexterity, there will often be areas that are not thoroughly cleaned. A parent should brush those areas for them and provide feedback.

 **Diet Control** – After brushing for bed, no more to eat or drink! Only water is acceptable. Any additional drinks or snacks can lead to tooth decay. Limit obvious sweets. Realistically you can't keep children from having candy forever. Still, limiting their repertoire of sweets and watching the frequency with which they eat them are important. Eating a lot at once is better than eating a little bit many times. Not every day and not several times a day is a good rule to follow. Bread, cookies, chips, rice cake, pizza, sweet potato, banana are all things to watch out for. They leave "goo" that sticks to teeth and can stay in the mouth for an hour, which can cause decay. Therefore, for between-meal snacks, fruits and vegetables are recommended.

 **Fluoride**- Despite what many people believe, fluoride is very good for teeth and effective in preventing tooth decay. Still, it's not a good idea to have our kids eat it inadvertently every day. If your child swallows his or her toothpaste, use a brand that doesn't contain fluoride. You can use some gauze, wet it with fluoride mouth rinse, and wipe your child's teeth instead. If a child can spit out their toothpaste, they can use a toothpaste with fluoride. A preschool child, the size of a sesame seed is enough. For a school-age child, only about the size of a grain of rice is enough. That's all the toothpaste that's needed to gain the benefits of fluoride. Oral health is an important part of overall well-being.

Please help keep our children's teeth healthy by reinforcing these dental health habits with them!