

Some Common Questions

What is baby bottle syndrome? It occurs when children suck on sweet liquids in their bottles for long periods of time. When sugars of any type are in contact with bacterial colonies (plaque), acid is produced which slowly eats holes in the teeth. Once the holes reach the dentin other bacteria enter the teeth and eat the inner dentin as a food source. This is what is called decay.

Sugars can come from milk, fruit juice, baby formula, etc. It is best to check sugar content, and not put kids to bed with juices. It may be important for some parents to know that many juices for kids have apple juice, and apple juice often causes diarrhea. Also, giving your child too much water can cause an electrolyte imbalance by diluting the chemicals in those little bodies. Check with your pediatrician, but in the meantime use bottles for a short time, take them away soon after they fall asleep, and wean them off the bottle as soon as possible.

Weaning teenagers off of sugar-filled sodas which often have added phosphoric acid, is something to strongly consider. One teaspoon of sugar equals about 4 g. Check to see how many teaspoons of sugar are in these drinks by dividing the grams by 4. How much are these drinks costing to purchase, how much are they costing in dental repairs, and how are they helping with nutrition?

When was dental floss first made? Prehistoric human skulls show signs of toothpick and floss use. Most likely small sticks of wood and fibrous strands of grass or other plant fiber were used to dislodge wedged food particles. Around 1815, Levi Spear Parmly, a New Orleans dentist, recommended passing silk thread between the teeth. The first company to make floss was Codman and Shurlett in Randolph, Massachusetts. They produced unwaxed silk floss. Johnson and Johnson in New Brunswick, New Jersey, obtained the first patent in 1898.

Those that do not floss because they cannot get their hands in their mouth to floss or do not want to, now have no excuse. *Reach Access* is an excellent one-handed device. Though replacement of its replaceable floss head is recommended daily, if you wash the tip each day it can last about two weeks without breaking. I highly recommend it for those who will not use their fingers, have long fingernails, or have a hand disability. Any floss that you use will help oral health and breath problems, waxed, un-waxed, tape, or fuzzy. Switch types if it shreds. Tie a knot in a new piece and pull the knot through if you get floss stuck between your teeth.

What is the major cause of bad breath? Other than garlic and onions, it is from sulfur gases caused by bacteria that feeds on food particles in-between our teeth and on the top surface of our tongues. *Breath Assure* and *Listerine* helps with garlic and onions. Dental cleanings every three to six months, flossing your teeth and brushing your tongue daily helps. Using a specially formulated toothpaste with chlorine dioxide helps if the others do not. CloSys II is excellent.