

Lesson 4: How and Why to Limit Sugar

Overview:

Students will discover how the amount of sugar in our diets affects the health of our teeth and how we can make choices about what to eat or drink to support our dental health.

Time Needed:

45 minutes

Supplies:

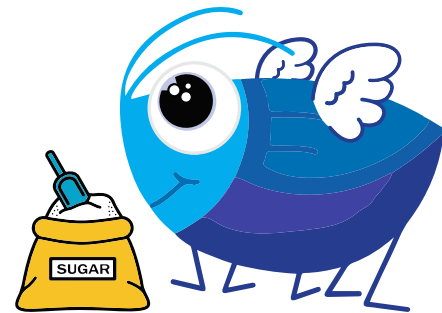
- How and Why to Limit Sugar Video
- [Happy Tooth, Sad Tooth](#) Activity Sheet
- [Added Sugar Visual Aid](#)
- *Healthy Habits with Family* Handout

Indiana Standards:
(K-2: 1.1, 1.5, 2.1, 3.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 7.1, 7.2, 8.1)
National Health Education Standards:
(1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.5, 1.2.6, 1.2.7, 2.2.1, 2.2.4, 2.2.5, 3.2.5, 4.2.2, 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.3, 5.2.4, 5.2.5, 5.2.6, 7.2.1, 7.2.2, 7.2.3, 8.2.2)

Review: "Are You Smarter Than a Sugar Bug?"

Briefly review key points from Lessons 1-3 with your students.

1. **Incisors** are the flat, sharp teeth in front of our mouth. **Cuspids**, or **canines**, are the sharp, pointy teeth in the corners of our mouth. **Molars** are the big, flat teeth in the back of our mouth.
2. **Plaque** is made when the bacteria that lives in our mouth mix with the food pieces that are left behind when we eat or drink. Plaque makes an acid that causes tooth decay, or cavities.
3. **Cavities** are tiny holes in our teeth. These tiny holes are made when the acid from the plaque has chewed its way inside our teeth.
4. Sugars in the foods and drinks we consume create germs in our mouth and plaque buildup. We can support a healthy smile by limiting sugary snacks and drinks and rinsing with water after we are finished with a snack or a meal.
5. Good dental health means that we are taking care of our teeth, gums, and tongue. To keep our mouth clean and healthy, we must practice healthy dental habits every day. Healthy dental habits are the ways we keep our teeth clean, like brushing, flossing, and eating less sugar. When we brush every day, we keep our teeth safe from cavities, bad breath, and gum disease.



Introduction:

Ask students the following questions to encourage them to think about healthy choices that they have made. (Words in parentheses show possible answers)

1. What does healthy mean to you? (*fruits, vegetables, good for the body, etc.*)
2. Can you make healthy choices? Yes you can! Healthy choices like eating more fruits and vegetables, drinking water every day, and moving our bodies make us strong and help us grow.
3. Who can name something they have done today to be healthy? (*taking a walk, eating strawberries, brushing teeth, etc.*)
4. Every day we all make choices. How do you know the choice you are making is a healthy one? (*it's good for my body, it helps me grow, etc.*)
5. How did you feel when you made a healthy choice? (*happy, proud, sad, disappointed, etc.*)
6. On a hot day, after we have been playing outside, what would be the healthiest drink to have? (*water*) Great job! Water is the healthiest drink for us, especially after playing outside on a hot day! Water helps our bodies grow and do their jobs.



Steps:

Discuss the importance of limiting sugar to dental health. Tell students why limiting sugar is good for our teeth.

- Limiting the amount of sugar we eat and drink can help us protect our teeth from plaque and cavities.
- There is sugar in many things we eat and drink. Even natural sugars found in honey and fruit juice can hurt our teeth if we don't take good care of them.
- Fizzy drinks like soda are not healthy for our teeth. When we drink soda, the sugar can add to plaque in our mouths.
- Every time we take a sip of soda, more sugar gets on our teeth. We can drink water after soda to help clean the sugar off our teeth. Wait 30 minutes after drinking soda, then we can brush our teeth to help them stay healthy.



Kindergarten – Grade 2

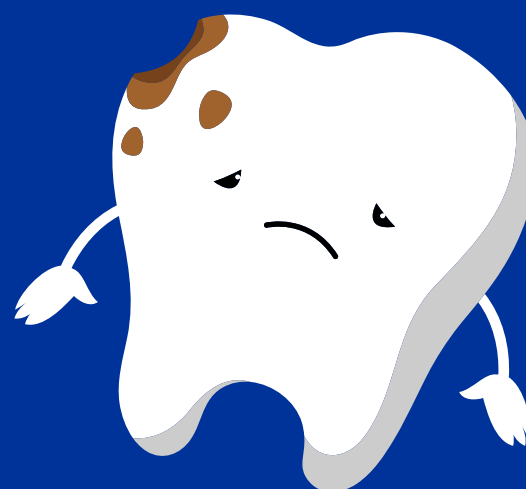
Limiting sugar does not mean we can never enjoy anything sweet! We can enjoy sugary foods and drinks, so long as we still remember to make healthy choices. Some healthy choices we can make to protect our teeth from sugary foods and drinks are:

- » Enjoying sugary snacks and drinks only sometimes, not every day.
- » Drinking tap water with fluoride, instead of soda or juice.
- » Not drinking soft drinks or juice after we brush our teeth before bed.
- » Visit the dentist for regular checkups and cleanings!

⚡ Activity Time

Next, pass around copies of the [Happy Tooth, Sad Tooth](#) activity sheet. Explain to students how to complete the activity.

1. On your activity sheet, you will see happy, smiling teeth and sad, frowning teeth. In the spaces next to those teeth, write down or draw different foods or drinks that would make your teeth happy or sad.
2. Give an example or two to get students thinking. For example, a carrot stick is a healthy snack that helps to clean the teeth as it is chewed. A gummy bear will stick to the teeth and invite plaque to build up.
3. Provide students with time to fill in their activity sheets.
4. When everyone is finished or time is up, discuss as a class different answers and ideas from the group.



Kindergarten – Grade 2

Go over some key points about plaque and how it affects the teeth.

1. Review key points about plaque:

- a. Plaque is what is made when the leftover pieces from the food we eat, mix with bacteria that lives in our mouth. These hungry bacteria will mix with anything we eat, but it loves sugars especially.
- b. Plaque is soft, sticky, and fuzzy. We brush our teeth twice a day for two minutes each time to clean the plaque from them, but...it moves fast! It only takes 20 minutes for plaque to form in our mouth after having sugary foods or drinks.
- c. When plaque hangs out on our teeth for longer than 24 hours, or one day, it becomes hard. Hardened plaque becomes something called tartar. Tartar has to be removed by a dental hygienist or a dentist.

2. Review key points about sugar:

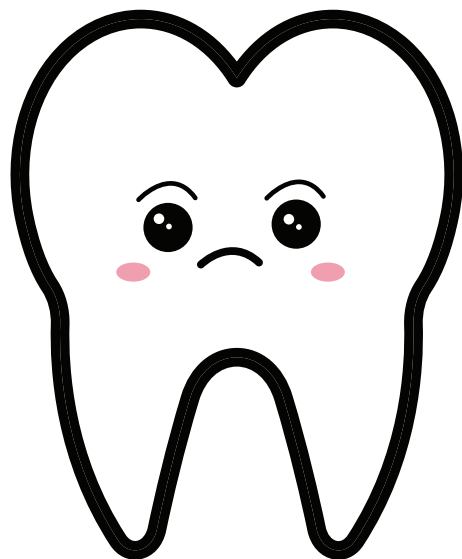
- a. Sugar that we eat or drink mix with germs in our mouth to create plaque and tooth decay. Ask if any of the students know how much sugar they should have in one day. *(Let students guess)*
 - i. Children ages 5-9 years old should have less than 25 grams, or 6 teaspoons, of added sugar each day.
 - ii. Added sugar is the sugar added during the processing of foods and does not include the natural sugars like those found in fruit.
- b. To cover nutrition label reading, use the [Added Sugar Visual Aid](#) to show students how much added sugar is the recommended limit for their age group per day and discuss how much added sugar is in common food and drink options. Send this visual home with students to share what they learned about added sugar.

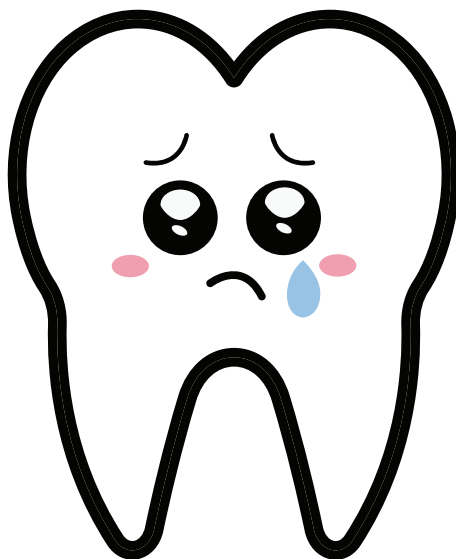


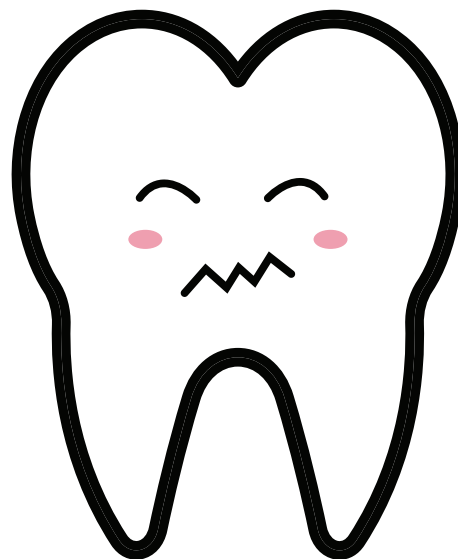
Pass out copies of the [Healthy Habits with Family Caregiver handout](#).

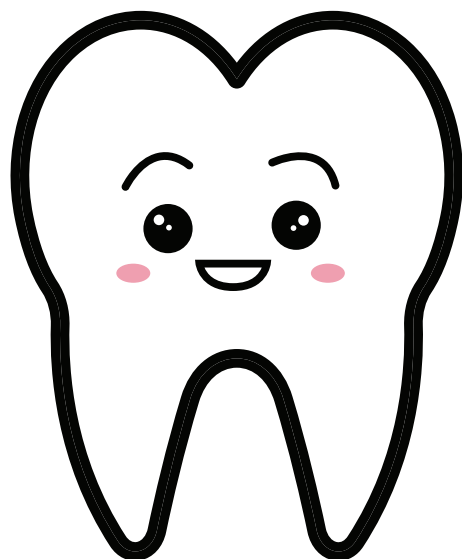
1. Tell students that this is a resource they can take home to share with their families to work together to support everyone's dental health.
2. When we all work together to build healthy habits, it's a lot easier to stick to them!

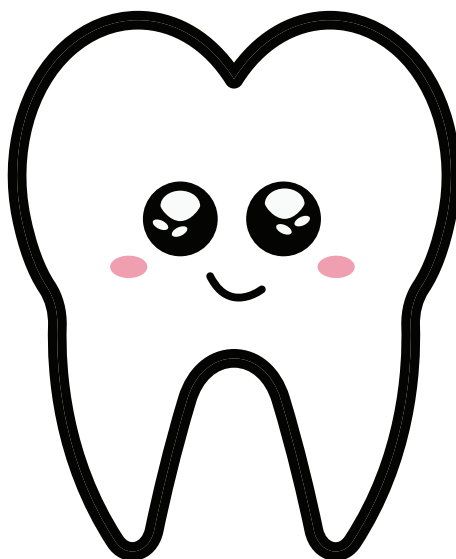
Happy Tooth, Sad Tooth

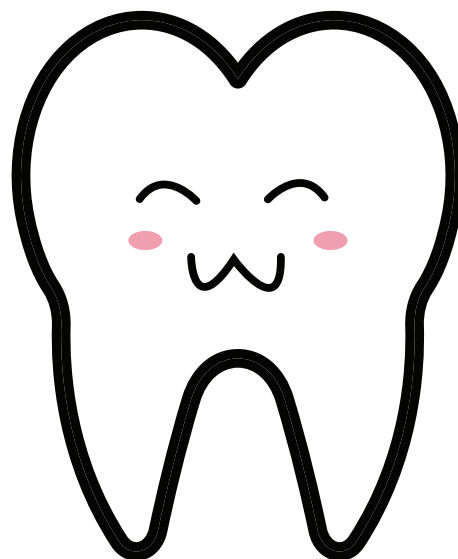












Added Sugar Visual Aid

Do you know how much sugar is in your favorite drinks or desserts?

25grams is about **6** teaspoons



It can add up quickly from....



Juice
30 grams



Soda
30 grams



Deserts
27 grams

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	

How to find added sugar:

Look on the packages of foods that have added sugar as the top three ingredients and then read the food label. While the food label includes foods that have naturally-occurring sugars, if the sugar is the top three ingredients, that is a good indicator that the sugar on the label is added.