

Nutrition

California Dental Association
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The food you eat directly affects your general health and your oral health. A diet low in important nutrients can make it hard for the body's immune system to fight off infection. According to the World Health Organization, diet and nutrition influence head/face development, oral cancer and oral diseases development. Dental diseases related to diet include cavities, developmental defects of enamel, dental erosion and periodontal (gum) disease.

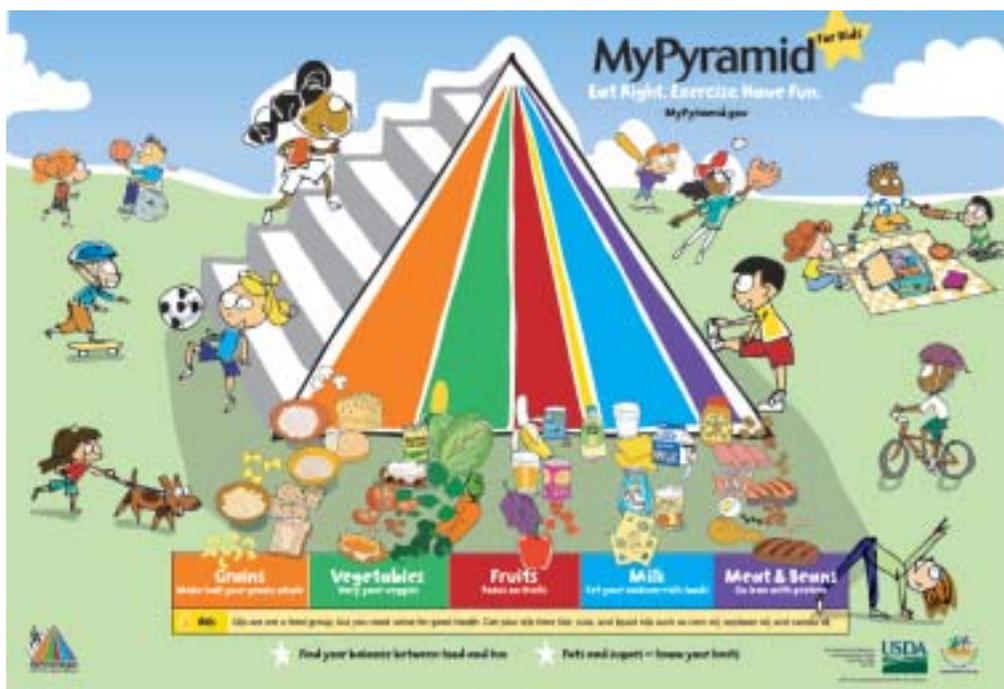
Eating patterns and food choices are important factors that affect the development of tooth decay. Bacteria stick to the film on your teeth called plaque. Bacteria feed on what you eat, especially sugars (including fruit sugars) and cooked starch (bread, potatoes, rice, pasta, etc.). About 5 minutes after you eat, or drink, the bacteria begin making acids as they digest your food. These acids can break down the tooth's outer surface and dissolve valuable minerals, resulting in cavities. Children and adults consume record amounts of sugar-filled sodas, sweetened fruit drinks, and non-nutritious snacks that affect their teeth. These items generally have little, if any nutritional value and over time take a toll on teeth.

When choosing foods keep the following in mind:

- **Variety**—Eat foods from all food groups
- **Proportionality**—Eat more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, fat-free or low-fat milk, and less foods with sugar, cholesterol & salt
- **Moderation**—Limit the number and amount of foods containing added sugars, cholesterol, salt
- **Activity**—Be physically active every day

Children should have at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day; adults need at least 30 minutes each day. While 30 minutes a day of moderate intensity physical activities provide health benefits, being active for longer or doing more vigorous activities can provide even greater health benefits.

Limit the number of between-meal snacks. When you must snack, choose nutritious foods that are low in sugar. Brush thoroughly twice a day with fluoridated toothpaste. Floss daily. Call your CDA member dentist to schedule regular checkups and cleanings.



The USDA oversees the nutritional health of the nation. The dietary recommendations are designed to promote optimal health and to prevent obesity-related diseases including cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and cancers. The USDA's recommendations recognize that people have different dietary needs at various stages of life. Visit the [U.S. Department of Agriculture's Web site](http://www.usda.gov) for more information.

USDA Daily Allowances

	Age	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk	Meat & Beans	Grains	Fats & Oils
Children	2-3 years old	1 cup	1 cup	2 cups	2 ounces	3 ounces	3 teaspoons
	4-8 years old	1 ½ cups	1 to 1 ½ cups	2 cups	3 – 4 ounces	4 – 5 ounces	4 teaspoons
Girls	9-13 years old	2 cups	1 ½ cups	3 cups	5 ounces	5 ounces	5 teaspoons
	14-18 years old	2 ½ cups	1 ½ cups	3 cups	5 ounces	6 ounces	5 teaspoons
Boys	9-13 years old	2 ½ cups	1 ½ cups	3 cups	5 ounces	6 ounces	5 teaspoons
	14-18 years old	3 cups	2 cups	3 cups	6 ounces	7 ounces	6 teaspoons
Women	19-30 years old	2 ½ cups	2 cups	3 cups	5 ½ ounces	6 ounces	6 teaspoons
	31-50 years old	2 ½ cups	1 ½ cups	3 cups	5 ounces	6 ounces	5 teaspoons
	51+ years old	2 cups	1 ½ cups	3 cups	5 ounces	5 ounces	5 teaspoons
Men	19-30 years old	3 cups	2 cups	3 cups	6 ½ ounces	8 ounces	7 teaspoons
	31-50 years old	3 cups	2 cups	3 cups	6 ounces	7 ounces	6 teaspoons
	51+ years old	2 ½ cups	2 cups	3 cups	5 ½ ounces	6 ounces	6 teaspoons