

13-17 years old

**Everyone smiles
in the same language!**

Take control of your oral health and avoid problems like tooth decay, tooth wear, gum disease and bad breath with great oral hygiene and a healthy diet.



DHF
Dental Health
Foundation
Ireland

Be sure to visit your dental team at least once a year for advice and a check-up to prevent tooth decay, tooth wear, gum disease and bad breath.

Tooth Tips

- Brush your teeth twice daily for a minimum of 2-3 minutes and gently brush your tongue to remove bacteria. Spit, don't rinse after brushing and change your brush when the bristles are worn, about every 3 months.
- Use a soft, small-headed brush (to reach those hard to access places), with fluoride toothpaste (at least 1,000 ppm). Fluoride keeps teeth strong and helps prevent tooth decay.
- Floss daily, to remove particles of food that may have become trapped and can cause gum inflammation, dental decay, and bad breath.
- If you wear braces, brush thoroughly every time you eat to remove food particles. Bring a travel toothbrush with you for convenience. Ask your dentist about mouthwash use.

Diet Tips

- Choose healthy snacks and drinks such as whole fruits and low-fat dairy.

- Avoid sugary snacks and drinks, and fizzy drinks between meals as they increase the risk of acid attacks, decay, and tooth wear.
- Some foods such as dried fruit or honey are also high in sugar – read food labels for sugar content (less than 5g per 100g is considered a low sugar).
- Limit fruit juice or a smoothie to one small glass per day at mealtimes. Unsweetened is best.
- Unflavoured milk and water are the best drinks when thirsty. Milk also aids muscle recovery after sport and exercise. Avoid high sugar sports drinks.

Things to Consider

- Some medications have a high sugar content. Ask your pharmacist for advice on a sugar-free option.
- Wear a mouthguard when playing sports to help reduce the risk of dental injuries.
- Mouth and tongue piercings can lead to infections, chipped and cracked teeth and damaged gums.