

February is National Children's Dental Health Month  
 "Water, Nature's Drink"

In the U.S., on average, individuals consume approximately 50 gallons of sugary beverages per year! Alarming, a steady diet of sugary foods and drinks can ruin teeth, especially among those who snack throughout the day. Common activities may contribute to the tendency toward tooth decay. These include — grazing habitually on foods with minimal nutritional value, and frequently sipping on sugary drinks. Consuming too much sugar can also affect your overall health, such as becoming overweight/obese or getting heart disease or type 2 diabetes. When sugar is consumed repeatedly in large, often hidden amounts, the harmful effect on teeth can be dramatic. Sugar on teeth provides food for bacteria, which produce acid. The acid in turn can eat away the enamel on teeth.

**Reduce your children's risk of tooth decay:**

- Sugary foods and drinks should be consumed with meals. Saliva production increases during meals and helps neutralize acid production and rinse food particles from the mouth.
- Limit between-meal snacks. If kids crave a snack, offer them nutritious foods.
- If your kids chew gum, make it sugarless
- Chewing sugarless gum after eating can increase saliva flow and help wash out food and decay-producing acid.
- Monitor beverage consumption
- Children should make healthy beverage choices such water and low-fat milk.
- Help your children develop good brushing and flossing habits.
- Schedule regular dental visits.



*Great American Pizza Bake*

**Sometimes pizza gets a bad rep for not being healthy.**

When you make homemade pizza, you are able to control the ingredients on it. Pizza can incorporate all food groups by adding fruit, vegetables, lean meat, low-fat cheeses, and whole grain crust and decreases the amount of saturated fat and salt.

**Hawaiian Pizza**

- ½-cup pizza sauce
- 1 - 8 ounce can refrigerated pizza dough
- 5 slices ham lunchmeat, chopped
- 1 - 8 oz. can pineapple tidbits, well drained
- 1 ½ -2 cups cheddar cheese

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Pat dough in greased or sprayed pizza pan.
3. Spread sauce, then pineapple, then ham slices and cheese on pizza crust.
4. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, until cheese is melted.

Add any other yummy toppings! Mushrooms, artichoke hearts, olives, tomatoes, and red bell peppers! Any veggie works if you love it!!

