

# Healthy Teens

June 2018 Parent Newsletter



## Keep Your Teen Smiling

It takes 17 muscles and two rows of teeth for your teen to smile. A smile means everything and is proven to increase confidence and enhance quality of life. So take good care of that smile.

Here are some tips to keep your teen smiling for life:

### Brush with fluoride toothpaste.

Brushing with fluoride toothpaste two times a day is an effective way to protect teeth from tooth decay. Remember that brushing before going to bed is the most important time because saliva decreases, which increases the chance for tooth decay.

### Drink water with fluoride.

Drinking tap water with fluoride is the best drink to quench your thirst. Not only does water help wash away food and debris in your mouth, the fluoride

strengthens your teeth and protects them from tooth decay.

### Limit sweet snacks and drinks.

Sweetened snacks and drinks can cause tooth decay. Be especially aware of drinks with sugar, like pop, sports drinks, specialty coffees, iced tea and slushy frozen drinks.

### Avoid injury to your teeth.

Mouth guards, seatbelts and face shields can help protect teeth. Mouth piercings, using teeth to open items, and chewing on hard objects can cause injury and should be avoided.

**Visit a dentist.** Ask your dentist about treatments to keep your teeth healthy.



**For more information on oral health visit**

[www.ahs.ca/oralhealth](http://www.ahs.ca/oralhealth)

## Articles

Keep Your Teen Smiling

First, Second and Third-hand Smoke

Skin cancer is largely preventable, with about 82% of melanomas linked to factors we can change. Exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UVR) is the main cause of skin cancer but other harmful effects include sunburn, premature skin aging, and eye damage. Choose sun-safety strategies that work: a broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher, use shade, clothing, a hat with a wide brim, and sunglasses. For more information visit <http://albertapreventscancer.ca/reduce-your-risk/limit-uv-rays/>



## First, Second and Third-hand Smoke

There are 7,000 chemicals in tobacco smoke, 69 of which we know cause cancer. There is no safe level of exposure to tobacco smoke. Tobacco smoke is either:

**First-hand:** this is what the smoker blows out.

**Second-hand:** this is what the smoker blows out or what is released from the end of a burning cigarette.

**Third-hand:** this is the harmful residue and gases left on surfaces (such as on furniture, in carpet and clothing) after a cigarette has been smoked.

In children, second-hand smoke increases the chance of respiratory infections (like chest colds) and ear infections. Children with asthma will likely have more serious attacks more often.

Smoking in the home or in the car affects everyone in the family, including pets. The best way to protect your family from



being exposed to second- and third-hand smoke is to make your home and car tobacco free.

Work together as a family to make a plan:

- Talk about the good things about a tobacco-free home and car.
- Give everyone a chance to speak.
- Plan for guests who may want to smoke.
- Set up an area outside away from doors and windows in case someone wants to smoke.

- Remove all ashtrays from inside your home and clean the one in your car.
- Have signs to welcome guests to your smoke-free home and vehicle.

Celebrate your success as a family. It may take some time for everyone to adjust – there may be small setbacks. Always keep in mind that people who smoke are addicted to nicotine, which can make changes, such as smoking outside, hard to do.

➤ **For more information and support in becoming tobacco-free visit [www.albertaquits.ca](http://www.albertaquits.ca) or call 1-866-710-QUIT (7848)**