

Jasper School District Health Newsletter

December 2014



Oral health is an integral part of overall health. In children, tooth decay has been associated with difficulty eating, sleeping and learning, and in maintaining proper nutrition. In Arkansas, 61 percent of children under age nine have already experienced tooth decay.

Although it is preventable, tooth decay is the most common chronic condition of childhood. Left untreated, tooth decay can cause pain and tooth loss.

In adults, untreated decay and the tooth loss causes negative effects on self-esteem and employability. In Arkansas, 29 percent of adults 65 and older have lost all of their teeth. The problem of tooth decay is far worse for Arkansans with low socioeconomic status and for those who live in rural areas.

The good news is that tooth decay and other mouth diseases that can affect children are preventable. The combination of dental sealants and fluoride has the potential to nearly eliminate tooth decay in school-age children.

What Parents and Caregivers Can Do

- Encourage your children to eat regular nutritious meals and avoid frequent snacking.
 - Protect your child's teeth with fluoride. -Use a fluoride toothpaste. If your child is less than 7 years old, put only a pea-sized amount on their toothbrush. If your drinking water is not fluoridated, talk to a dentist or physician about the best way to protect your child's teeth.
 - Talk to your child's dentist about dental sealants. They protect teeth from decay.
 - Don't Forget to Brush teeth regularly (at least twice a day).
- ✓ If you are interested in seeing the dentist at the School Based Health Center, please call 870-446-6740 for an appointment with Dr. Hubbard.

- ✓ For more information, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/OralHealth> or <http://www.healthy.arkansas.gov>