

## What have teeth got to do with the heart?

Dental disease or its treatment can cause a disease of the heart called Infective Endocarditis. This is an infection of the inner lining of the heart caused by bacteria in the blood stream.

## How do bacteria enter the bloodstream?

**FROM:** Dental Disease

- Badly decayed teeth
- Inflamed gums / gum disease

**FROM:** Dental Extractions

Your dentist will arrange antibiotic cover to prevent infective endocarditis.

## What causes dental disease?

**Bacteria** (germs) in the mouth feed off **sugar** in food we eat. The **sugar** is converted to **acid** which can cause **decay**. **Bacteria** also make the **gums inflamed** and can cause **gum disease**.

## How do you prevent dental disease?

### **Control sugar**

Avoid sugary foods and drinks between meals. Sweets are best given after a meal.

Do not put sweetened drinks in bottles for young children.

Ask for sugar-free medicines.

### **Tooth Brushing**

Help and encourage your child to brush their teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.

Choose a small brush and use a small pea size amount of toothpaste for under 6 year olds.

## Register with a dentist

Register your child as soon as possible and inform the dentist that your child has a congenital heart defect. Your dentist will then be able to provide the best possible advice and treatment.

Ask for advice about fluoride supplements.

Your dentist will be able to provide plastic coatings to protect your child's adult molar teeth when they erupt at around 6 years of age.

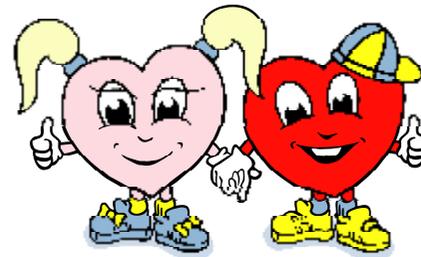
## Your consultant

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and the cardiac team  
recommend the following:

- Avoid sugary food and drink between meals.
- Brush teeth twice daily with fluoride toothpaste.
- Register with a dentist.
- Inform the dentist your child has a congenital heart defect as you need extra advice.
- Ask for sugar-free medicines.
- Use fluoride supplements if advised.
- Ask for plastic coatings of permanent molar teeth.

For further information  
please contact

Notes



## Children's Heart Association

### Helpline

01706 221988

### Web

[www.heartchild.info](http://www.heartchild.info)

The Children's Heart Association (North West)  
is a Registered Charity (267893).

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Tommy Ticker



**Oral Health Network**  
SAVING SMILES

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