

TRICARE BENEFICIARY BULLETIN – AUGUST 27 - 722 WORDS (614)

LEAD MUSIC (:03)

THIS IS THE TRICARE BENEFICIARY BULLETIN, AN UPDATE ON THE LATEST NEWS TO HELP YOU MAKE THE BEST USE OF YOUR TRICARE BENEFIT. I'M AUSTIN CAMACHO (:10)

FIRST UP: LORRAINE CWIEKA REPORTS ON DENTAL SEALANTS PREVENTING AND HALTING DECAY.

OUR TEETH ARE COATED WITH A STICKY FILM OF BACTERIA CALLED PLAQUE. SOME OF WHAT WE EAT STICKS TO OUR TEETH AND GUMS WHEN WE CONSUME FOODS AND BEVERAGES.

THE PLAQUE BACTERIA USE BITS OF FOOD AND LIQUIDS TO CREATE ACIDS THAT ATTACK AND DESTROY TOOTH ENAMEL. REPEATED ACID ATTACKS EVENTUALLY MAY CAUSE TOOTH DECAY. ANYONE CAN DEVELOP TOOTH DECAY AT ANY AGE.

ONE OF THE MOST COMMON SPOTS FOR DECAY TO DEVELOP IS ON THE CHEWING SURFACES OF THE BACK TEETH.

IF YOU RUN YOUR TONGUE ALONG THE CHEWING SURFACES, YOU WILL FEEL ROUGH GROOVES. DAILY BRUSHING AND FLOSSING HELPS REMOVE FOOD PARTICLES AND BACTERIA FROM THE SMOOTH SURFACES ALONG THE SIDES OF AND BETWEEN THE TEETH. HOWEVER, PITS AND FISSURES ARE MORE DIFFICULT TO KEEP CLEAN.

BECAUSE PITS AND FISSURES ARE DIFFICULT TO KEEP CLEAN, YOUR DENTIST MAY RECOMMEND PROTECTING THEM WITH DENTAL SEALANTS, A SPECIAL PLASTIC COATING THAT COVERS AND SEALS THE CHEWING SURFACES.

SEALANTS ACT AS A BARRIER, PROTECTING TOOTH ENAMEL FROM PLAQUE BACTERIA AND ACID. CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS ARE OBVIOUS CANDIDATES FOR SEALANTS.

ADULTS CAN BENEFIT FROM SEALANTS, BECAUSE ONE NEVER OUTGROWS TOOTH DECAY. TALK WITH YOUR DENTIST TO

DETERMINE IF DENTAL SEALANTS CAN HELP PROTECT YOUR  
TEETH.

FOR TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M LORRAINE CWIEKA.

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NEXT, HEALTHY HABITS FOR YOUR CHILD.

THERE ARE MANY STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO HELP YOUR CHILD  
HAVE A HEALTHY CHILDHOOD. FOR INSTANCE, MAKE PHYSICAL  
ACTIVITY A REGULAR PART OF YOUR CHILD'S LIFE. EXERCISE IS  
NOT ONLY ESSENTIAL FOR HEALTHY BONES AND GROWTH, IT  
CAN ALSO HELP YOUR CHILD DEVELOP SELF ESTEEM, LEARN  
ABOUT SHARING AND MAKE FRIENDS.

THERE ARE A FEW THINGS YOU CAN DO TO ENGAGE YOUR  
CHILD IN REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY. EXPOSE YOUR CHILD  
TO A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES. MAKE FITNESS A FAMILY AFFAIR.  
LIMIT THE AMOUNT OF TV, VIDEO GAMES AND COMPUTER TIME  
AND MAKE EXERCISE FUN BY INCLUDING GAMES OR  
ENCOURAGING ACTIVITIES YOUR CHILD ENJOYS.

IN ADDITION TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, TEACH YOUR CHILD TO MAKE SMART FOOD CHOICES. OFFER HEALTHY FOODS AT EVERY MEAL. MAKE IT EASY FOR YOUR CHILD TO CHOOSE HEALTHY SNACKS BY KEEPING FRESH FRUITS SUCH AS APPLES OR ORANGES, VEGETABLES SUCH AS CARROT STICKS OR BROCCOLI, WHOLE-WHEAT CRACKERS AND LOW-FAT YOGURT AVAILABLE TO EAT.

INCLUDE FOODS WITH CALCIUM, IRON AND FIBER IN YOUR CHILD'S DIET. LIMIT THE AMOUNT OF SUGAR, FAT AND PROCESSED FOODS YOUR CHILD CONSUMES. ENSURE YOUR CHILD EATS A NUTRITIOUS BREAKFAST EVERY DAY.

FOR MORE IDEAS AND INFORMATION ON KEEPING YOUR CHILD HEALTHY, TALK WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.

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AND FINALLY, LORRAINE CWIEKA REPORTS THAT CARING FOR YOUR CHILD'S TEETH IS IMPORTANT NOW AND ALWAYS.

PRACTICING GOOD ORAL HEALTH HABITS IS IMPORTANT FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS ALIKE. BY FOLLOWING PROPER ORAL HEALTH CARE BRUSHING AND FLOSSING EVERY DAY, MAINTAINING HEALTHY EATING HABITS AND VISITING YOUR DENTIST EVERY SIX MONTHS, IT'S POSSIBLE TO GO FROM CHILDHOOD TO ADULTHOOD WITHOUT EVER HAVING A CAVITY.

BEFORE YOUR BABY'S FIRST TOOTH APPEARS, BE SURE TO WIPE HIS OR HER GUMS WITH A SOFT CLOTH AFTER EACH FEEDING. AS YOUR CHILD'S TEETH START COMING IN, FOLLOW SOME OF THESE TIPS.

BRUSH WITH A SOFT, CHILD-SIZE TOOTHBRUSH AND WATER FOR CHILDREN YOUNGER THAN AGE TWO. SEEK ADVICE FROM A DENTIST BEFORE INTRODUCING TOOTHPASTE TO CHILDREN YOUNGER THAN AGE TWO. DO NOT ALLOW YOUR BABY TO NAP OR GO TO BED WITH A BOTTLE OF MILK, FORMULA OR JUICE. A BOTTLE OF WATER WILL NOT CAUSE DENTAL HARM. TAKE YOUR CHILD TO THE DENTIST AROUND HIS OR HER FIRST BIRTHDAY. SWITCH FROM BOTTLES TO CUPS WHEN YOUR CHILD

IS 12 TO 14 MONTHS OLD. HELP YOUR CHILD BRUSH AND FLOSS UNTIL HE OR SHE IS ABLE TO DO IT ALONE USUALLY AROUND AGE SEVEN.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CARING FOR YOUR TEETH, VISIT THE TRICARE DENTAL PROGRAM WEB SITE AT [WWW.TRICAREDENTALPROGRAM.COM](http://WWW.TRICAREDENTALPROGRAM.COM) AND CLICK ON INFORMATION ON DENTAL HEALTH.

FOR TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M LORRAINE CWIEKA.

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AND THAT'S TODAY'S TRICARE BENEFICIARY BULLETIN. WE'LL HAVE MORE NEWS YOU CAN USE NEXT WEEK. (:03)

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