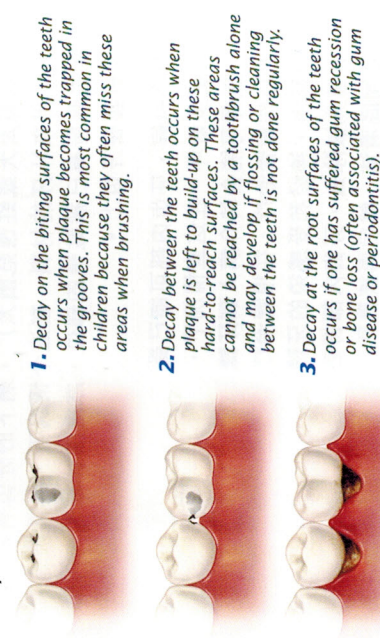


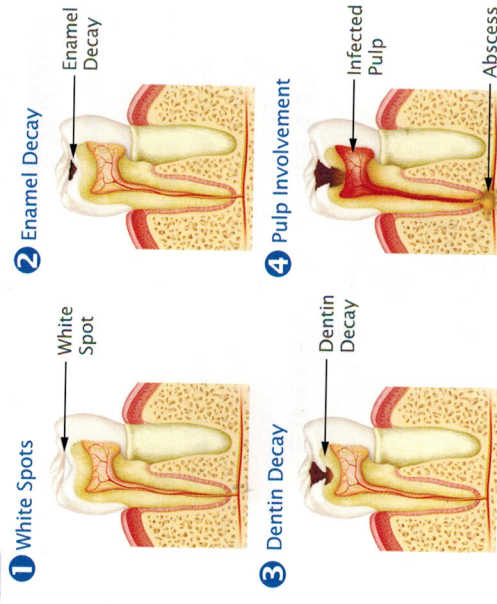
Which areas of the teeth are likely to decay?

There are three different places where a tooth can experience decay.



1. Decay on the biting surfaces of the teeth occurs when plaque becomes trapped in the grooves. This is most common in children because they often miss these areas when brushing.
2. Decay between the teeth occurs when plaque is left to build-up on these hard-to-reach surfaces. These areas cannot be reached by a toothbrush alone and may develop if flossing or cleaning between the teeth is not done regularly.
3. Decay at the root surfaces of the teeth occurs if one has suffered gum recession or bone loss (often associated with gum disease or periodontitis).

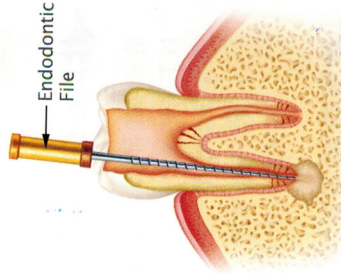
What are the stages of tooth decay?



1. Bacteria that are exposed to sugars or carbohydrates can make acid, which attacks the enamel of the tooth. This process is known as demineralization. The first sign of this is a chalky white spot. At this stage, the decay process can be reversed.
2. Demineralization continues. Enamel starts to break down. Once the enamel surface is broken, the tooth can no longer repair itself. The cavity has to be cleaned and restored by a dentist.
3. The decay reaches into the dentin where it can spread and undermine the enamel.
4. If decay is left untreated, it will reach the tooth's pulp, which contains nerves and blood vessels. The pulp becomes infected. An abscess (swelling) or a fistula (opening to the surface of the gum) can form in the soft tissues.

What is the treatment for dental cavities?

- The standard treatment for cavities is to fill/restore the tooth.
- If the cavity is large with extensive erosion, the remaining tooth may not be able to support the amount of filling material that would be needed to repair it. In this case, the dentist will remove the decay, fill the cavity, and cover the tooth with an artificial crown.
- Sometimes there may be more damage in the interior of the tooth. In these cases, the dentist may refer to a dental specialist called an endodontist for root canal treatment. During this procedure, the nerve and infected pulp are removed and the inside of the tooth is cleaned and sealed. In most cases, the tooth's natural crown will need to be replaced with an artificial crown.



What can be done to prevent tooth decay?

There are several things that can be done to slow down or prevent the breakdown process which leads to cavities. Here are some useful tips:

- Brush twice a day with toothpaste providing round-the-clock protection. **Colgate®** toothpaste is the brand most often recommended by dentists, among which **Colgate Total®** may provide the following benefits:



- ✓ It provides complete 12-hour antibacterial protection
- ✓ Fights plaque build-up, bad breath and helps prevent caries

- Clean between your teeth daily to remove plaque from areas your toothbrush cannot reach using interdental aids like floss or an interdental toothbrush.

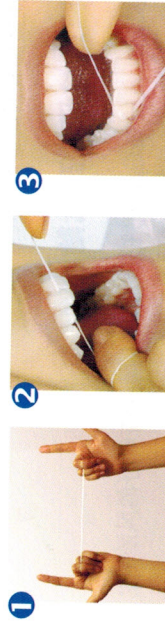
- Rinse thoroughly, twice daily, after brushing with an anti-cavity dental rinse like **Colgate Plax®** non-alcohol mouthwash.
- Eat a healthy diet and limit carbohydrate intake.
- Visit your dentist regularly for professional cleanings and oral examination.

What is the right way to brush?



1. Place the toothbrush at a 45-degree angle towards the gumline. Use gentle, short strokes, moving the brush back and forth against the teeth and gums.
2. Brush the inside surface of each tooth in a similar way.
3. Brush the chewing surface of each tooth.
4. Use the tip of the brush to brush behind each front tooth, both top and bottom.
5. For fresher breath, don't forget to brush your tongue!

What is the right way to floss?



1. Take about 18 inches of floss and loosely wrap most of it around each middle finger (wrapping more around one finger than the other) leaving 2 inches of floss in between.
2. With the thumbs and index fingers holding the floss, gently slide it down between your teeth, while being careful not to snap it down on the gums.
3. Curve the floss around each tooth in a "C" shape and gently move it up and down the sides of each tooth, including under the gumline. Unroll a new section of floss while moving from tooth to tooth.