

# Teeth Talk

A Newsletter for Parents of Children Enrolled in Maryland's Head Start Programs

## Things You Can Do at Home to Support Today's Lesson

- Ask your child to tell you what they learned about teeth today.
- Ask your child to explain what a cavity is.
- Ask your child to tell you how a cavity is made.
- Ask your child to tell you who can fix a cavity.
- Ask your child to explain why it is important to have a cavity fixed.



## Today We Learned That Teeth Can Get Cavities

Today your child learned about cavities. A cavity is a hole in a tooth. To get a cavity you need three things:

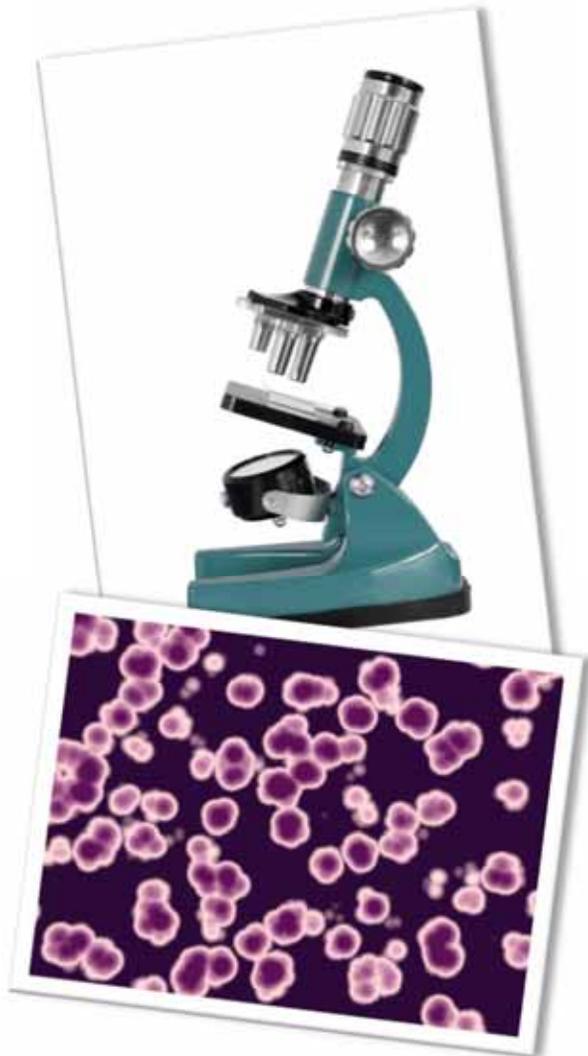
- Germs
- Teeth
- Sugar

Everyone has germs in their mouth that can cause cavities. You can only see these germs through a microscope.

The germs that cause cavities love to eat sugar in foods or drinks. When germs eat sugar, they break down the hard outer covering of the tooth. If sugar is in the mouth for a long time, it gives the germs more time to make a cavity.

Cavities do not heal like cuts or scrapes. Once the tooth has a cavity, the hole will get bigger and bigger and can cause pain and infection. The only way to stop a cavity from getting bigger is to have a dentist fix it.





## A Song to Sing at Home

### Tooth Decay

(Sing to the tune of "The Wheels on the Bus")

I'm a germ and I like your teeth  
 Like your teeth  
 Like your teeth  
 I'm a germ and I like your teeth  
 I'll stick around all day.

My favorite food is sugar, sugar, sugar  
 Sugar, sugar, sugar  
 Sugar, sugar, sugar  
 My favorite food is sugar, sugar, sugar  
 It helps me make decay.

Sugar makes me strong, strong, strong  
 Strong, strong, strong  
 Strong, strong, strong  
 Sugar makes me strong, strong, strong  
 So I can make decay.

Watch how many treats you eat  
 Treats you eat  
 Treats you eat  
 Watch how many treats you eat  
 To keep decay away.

## Did You Know?

Tooth decay is the most common childhood illness in the United States today.

Children ages 2 to 6 have more cavities than children did 10 years ago. Scientists think this is because children are eating and drinking more foods and drinks that are high in sugar. Children who drink juice, sports drinks, soda pop, and other sweet drinks between meals are more likely to get tooth decay than children who drink water or milk.

