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10 Super Foods For the Preggy Mum

Spa ^{your} Face

Where, what and how much...

MUST-READ!

Kids' ^{safety} Special

In the home, car and water

TRUE STORY!

"I was Pregnant & Thrown off a Bike!"

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2 Medela
Swing Breast
Pumps
*See inside for details.



Motherhood Exhibition ■ 5 - 8 June 2008 ■ 12 - 10 pm ■ Singapore Expo Hall 5A

Q & A

My teenage girl used to have a set of perfect teeth. However, I've been told by her dentist lately that her oral hygiene is poor and that some of her teeth are decayed. How can I encourage her to pay more attention to her teeth? She hates me nagging at her everyday.

A teenager should be managed differently from a child. Nagging at her to brush her teeth everyday may not help. Check on her time management. Is she overloaded with work or activities? If this is the case, advise her on time management. Some of the teenagers I know study till they fall asleep without brushing their teeth. I normally advise them to brush their teeth immediately after dinner or supper. They are then permitted to fall asleep with their books any time after that.

Observe whether there is a change in her eating habit and in her diet. If she is snacking more frequently, then advise her to at least rinse her mouth more often. If she is taking more fizzy drinks lately, then advise her on a healthier choice of drinks.

Lastly, but not least, have a chat with her dentist. Request for the dentist to teach her the proper brushing and flossing techniques. Take her to the dentist more often if her oral hygiene remains poor.

It is so difficult to brush my child's teeth. I always end up screaming at him or caning him. Can brushing be less of a chore?

Yes, brushing should not be a chore, but it should be a habit for both you and your child. If you think that brushing is a chore, then your child will inevitably perceive it to be so.

I do agree that it is almost, if not, always a challenge to inculcate the daily habit of brushing in children. Nonetheless, you can succeed to do so with a little patience, persistence and creativity.

You may find the following suggestions helpful:-

- **Make brushing fun for your child** - Put him in a bathtub filled with floating rubber ducks or boats. Give him a colourful and attractive toothbrush. Hold his hand with the toothbrush and start brushing the toys. Next, slowly proceed to brush his fingers and then his teeth. This lets him feel the bristles of the toothbrush first before putting it into his mouth. Hence, he will find it less "threatening" to brush his teeth. At the same time, this helps him to learn the action of brushing.
- **Make brushing a family activity** - Set aside some time after dinner or supper to brush your teeth together with him. To make it more interesting, your family members can compete with one another to see who has the cleanest teeth after toothbrushing.
- **Use the reward system** - You can keep track of your child's good behavior by marking on the calendar together with him, each time he brushes his teeth well. Reward him with stickers, ice-cream or an outing if he brushes his teeth well without kicking a fuss for a week. The reward will give him a sense of achievement and will encourage him not to miss any toothbrushing session.
- **Focus on telling him about the advantages of keeping his teeth clean** - Praise him for looking so handsome with his teeth cleaned. Cook his favourite dish and tell him that he can enjoy eating with a good set of teeth.



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