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Celebrate National Brush Day on November 1

Following basic oral health tips can help prevent unwanted dental problems after Halloween

Oklahoma City, Oct 27, 2016 – The Oklahoma Dental Association recommends parents follow good oral health habits to help keep their family's teeth healthy and cavity-free during one the sweetest times of the year, and year-round.

What you put in your mouth impacts not only your general health but also that of your teeth and gums. The American Dental Association (ADA) and the Oklahoma Dental Association (ODA) suggest following these oral health tips, especially during the holiday season.

Eat Halloween candy, and other sugary foods, with meals or shortly after mealtime. The increased amount of saliva produced during mealtime can help wash away food particles and acids that are built up by bacteria.

Avoid hard candy and other sweets that stay in your mouth for a long period of time. Hard candies typically remain in the mouth longer than other types of candies, which increase the risk for tooth decay. It is important to keep in mind the length of time it takes to eat a piece of candy.

Stay away from sticky treats. Sticky candies take a longer time to get washed away by saliva, increasing the risk for tooth decay.

Drink more water. Although this may seem unrelated to eating sweets, drinking fluoridated water can actually prevent tooth decay. When teeth come in frequent contact with beverages that contain sugar, the risk for tooth decay is increased. Encourage children to enjoy a glass of water with their Halloween haul instead of sugary drinks.

Chew gum with the ADA Seal. Chewing sugarless gum for 20 minutes after meals or sweets helps to reduce tooth decay because increased saliva flow washes out food and neutralize the acid produced by bacteria.

Brush twice a day. Brush your teeth twice a day for two minutes with an ADA-accepted fluoride toothpaste. Also, replace your toothbrush every three or four months, or sooner, if the bristles are frayed. A worn toothbrush won't do a good job of cleaning your teeth.

Visit your dentist. Regular visits to your ADA/ODA-member dentist can help prevent problems from occurring and catch those that do occur early when they are easy to "treat." To search for a dentist near you, visit www.okda.org.

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“Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease in America and, yet, it’s 100 percent preventable,” said ODA President Edmund Braly, DDS. “National Brush Day aims to emphasize the importance of children’s oral health and to promote healthy brushing habits of two minutes, two times a day.”

The Oklahoma Dental Association is dedicated to mitigating the harmful effects that holiday sweets and foods have on dental hygiene by providing information that help Oklahomans keep their teeth healthy. For more information about healthy dental habits for families, visit www.MouthHealthy.org.

The Oklahoma Dental Association, founded in 1907, has a membership of more than 1,600 dentists. The Association was established to help foster an awareness of the obligations and responsibilities of the dental profession to society, to help advance the art and science of dentistry and to promote public health and health services in the State of Oklahoma. For more information, visit www.okda.org.

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Editor’s Note: If you would like to contact an ODA/ADA member dentist about oral health, please contact the ODA at 405.848.8873 or e-mail tevens@okda.org.

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