

# **eat well**

## **FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS**

*Eating a wide variety of nutritious foods is important, especially during childhood when growth and development are occurring. Childhood is a time when eating habits are established, so it is important for parents to encourage healthy eating behaviours that can contribute to good oral health and overall wellbeing.*

### **Foods your child can eat everyday**

**Foods that should make up the bulk of your child's healthy diet include:**

- ★ *fruit, including fresh, frozen and tinned (select tinned fruit in natural fruit juice)*
- ★ *vegetables, including fresh, raw, steamed and grilled*
- ★ *grains and cereals, including rice, pasta, noodles, buckwheat, polenta, pita bread, flat bread, english muffins, crumpets, crispbreads, crackers, low sugar breakfast cereals, rolled oats, rice cakes, wheat bread, wheat rolls, rye bread, multigrain bread*
- ★ *cheese slices or sticks, fruit or plain yoghurt (soy-based calcium enriched foods can be a substitute for dairy)*
- ★ *lean meat, chicken, fish, lentils, baked beans, tofu, hard boiled eggs*
- ★ *hommus dip, tahini spread, peanut butter, cheese spread*
- ★ *water and plain milk*

### **Who to ask for more information**

- ★ *Dentist, Dental Therapist or Dental Hygienist*
- ★ *Maternal and Child Health Nurse*
- ★ *Family Doctor*
- ★ *School Nurse*
- ★ *Dietitian*

### **Remember**

*Healthy, nutritious food and calcium help prevent tooth decay and support overall wellbeing.*



**MUNCHGIRL™**

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### Foods to limit in your child's diet

Frequent consumption of sweet sticky foods can contribute to tooth decay (dental caries) as sugars form acids which can attack tooth enamel. Food and drinks containing added sugars should be limited, especially between meals. If your child does eat sweet sticky foods, they are best eaten at mealtimes rather than between meals.

Limit sweet sticky snacks such as fruit bars or muesli bars, sweet biscuits, lollies, chocolate and fruit strips.

Limit fruit juice or other sweet drinks such as soft drinks, sports drinks and cordial. Children do not need sweet drinks for good health. Drinking large amounts of sweet drinks may result in tooth decay.

Avoid giving lollies, sweet biscuits or chocolate as treats or rewards for your child. A treasure jar full of balloons, stickers, books and toys is a better idea.

Limit fast foods such as hot chips, potato chips or crisps, meat pies, sausage rolls, ice cream and dairy desserts.

### Snack ideas

Healthy, nutritious food and dairy products such as cheese and milk, help prevent tooth decay. Healthy snacks between mealtimes should include fresh fruit pieces, yoghurt, cheese and dry biscuits, chopped vegetables and sandwiches. Having a 'snack box' in the fridge containing these types of foods is a good idea.



### Other fact sheets for parents include:

